

WCT REVIEWS
THE MOVIE
'PAIN & GAIN'

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WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN,
BI AND TRANS COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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Lesbian lawyer lives her passion

BY STEPHEN SONNEVELD

Fifty miles south of Cleveland is Massillon, Ohio, where the once-thriving steel mills have now closed, and Friday nights are still reserved for football. An eclectic host of personalities have called "Tigertown" home, including straight white seismologist Jack Oliver, who discovered plate tectonics; straight white NCAA basketball coach Bobby Knight; straight white film legend Lillian Gish; and African-American lesbian lawyer Lori Lightfoot.

On April 3, Lightfoot returned to Massillon to receive the Distinguished Citizen Award, which the Canton Repository reported is awarded to Washington High School Alumni "who have made an impact on society by



Lori Lightfoot.
Photo by Andrew Davis

changing it for the better."

In an address to the students that morning, Lightfoot proclaimed, "I stand before you as a very, very proud product of this community," [and] "I trace every success and achievement I had ... to this wonderful place."

Lightfoot explained to Windy City Times that her small town "placed a great deal of emphasis on community, on loyalty to your neighbors, looking out for each other, so that was something that was really ingrained in me in an early stage of my life."

When Lightfoot was growing up, her mother served on the local school board, and examples such as that helped instill public service to being, as she puts it,

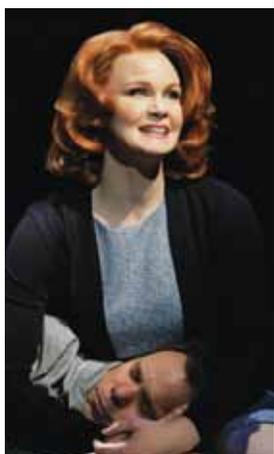
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Out actor Marcus Shane—who is part of the current Broadway in Chicago production Anything Goes—walks with WCT. Publicity photo

PARIS IN THE SPRING



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Out TV/film director Paris Barclay discusses everything from having a family to his Barbara Jordan biopic that stars Viola Davis. Photo courtesy of FX



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FOUND A CURE?

Scientists and activists such as Dazon Dixon Diallo (left) react to reports of an HIV "cure" in a baby.

Photo of Diallo courtesy of Diallo



Snow White's Poison Bite (above) is among the acts profiled in Bent Nights and Pop Making Sense this week.

Photo by Vern Hester



The LGBT South Asian group Trikone-Chicago held a fundraiser. See photos from the event.

Photo from Jay Long

YOU AUTO KNOW

Read all about the 2013 Mazda CX-5 and catch up on vehicle-related news.

MEAT AND GREET

Windy City Times takes a look at El's Kitchen & Bar, which specializes in "rock 'n' roll BBQ." Also, see pics from Baconfest and "All Things Chocolate."

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Find out the latest about Glee, Daft Punk and Ellen DeGeneres.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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Boy Scouts may remove ban—with conditions

BY KATE SOSIN

Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is poised to remove its ban on openly gay scouts, the organization has announced. The ban on openly gay adult leaders, however, would remain.

After years of controversy surrounding the ban on openly gay scouts and leaders, the organization's executive committee has drafted a resolution "that would remove the restriction denying membership to youth on the basis of sexual orientation alone and would maintain the current membership policy for all adult leaders of the Boy Scouts of America," a BSA statement said.

The resolution still needs to be approved at BSA's national meeting next month.

However, LGBT leaders criticized the proposal as falling short.

"It is good news that BSA leadership is open to ending the ban on gay Scouts, but this resolution must go further," said Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin, in a statement. "Parents and adults of good moral character, regardless of sexual orientation, should be able to volunteer their time to mentor the next generation of Americans. What message does this resolution send to the gay Eagle Scout who, as an adult, wants to continue a lifetime of scouting by becoming a troop leader?"

Rich Ferraro, vice president of communications at GLAAD, said in a statement that BSA had failed its stakeholders who support an end to discrimination.

"By refusing to consider an end to its ban on gay and lesbian parents, the Boy Scouts have missed an opportunity to exercise leadership and usher the organization back to relevancy," Ferraro said. "We're living in a culture where, until every young person and parent have the same opportunity to serve, the Boy Scouts will continue to see a decline in both membership and donations."

Jennifer Tyrrell, an Ohio mom who was forced out of her son's troop because of her sexual orientation, said the proposal continued to send the message that her family is not good enough.

"My heart goes out to the young adults in Scouting who would be able to continue as scouts if this is passed, but then be thrown out when they reach the age to become leaders," she said in a statement.

Zach Wahls, the founder of Scouts for Equality and a son of lesbian moms, expressed mixed feelings on the proposal in a media statement.

"For families like mine, the BSA's ban on gay leaders will continue to prevent many great and loving parents from sharing the joys of Scouting with their children," Wahls said. "But today, this is about the kids, and we are glad that the Boy Scouts of America is taking this historic step forward."

The April 19 announcement comes alongside news that the BSA Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) told its members that it will support a change in the policy, confirmed Mike Hale, the council's scout executive.

The NEIC proposal recommends removing language that bans openly gay members and replacing it with an anti-discrimination statement.

"While recognizing the rights of our chartered organizations to determine the leadership and membership of their units in accordance with the lawful principles of those chartered organizations, it is the policy of the BSA as an organization not to discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, religious affiliation, national origin, ethnicity, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, or political affiliation," the proposal reads.

Hale said that the council's board met and created a statement in support of the change after most of the groups member's said they wanted the anti-gay language removed.

"They felt that times have changed, that people are more accepting of other lifestyles," Hale said.

Hale said that the council heard from both sides on the issue, but that most, including most church-based groups, advocated for the change.

"Many of our faith-based charters have different policies than ours," said Hale. "They're more inclusive than ours."

NEIC is one of about 280 councils nationwide. NEIC will not weigh in on whether BSA should allow individual charters to create their own policies around gay scouts, Hale said. Rather, the council will advocate for the removal of the national rule against gay scouting.

The BSA Chicago Area Council did not specifically address its stance on the ban in a statement released to Windy City Times.

"Our council's focus will remain on creating an environment where people who may disagree on a variety of topics can still work together to achieve life-changing benefits to youth through the scouting program," the group said.

The scouts' ban on gay members has embroiled the national organization in controversy in recent months, as the group announced earlier this year it was considering ending the ban, but then declined to make an immediate decision.

BSA is expected to vote on the resolution at its national meeting in May.

According to the Scouting Magazine blog, the BSA resolution is as follows:

"Youth membership in the Boy Scouts of America is open to all youth who meet the specific membership requirements to join the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, Sea Scout, and Venturing programs. Membership in any program of the Boy Scouts of America requires the youth member to (a) subscribe to and abide by the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law, (b) subscribe to and abide by the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle (duty to God), and (c) demonstrate behavior that exemplifies the highest level of good conduct and respect for others and is consistent at all times with the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. No youth may be denied membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone."

NCLR sees good, bad in immigration proposal

National Center for Lesbian Rights Executive Director Kate Kendell issued a statement saying that a senatorial proposal for comprehensive immigration reform legislation falls short in some areas, according to a press release.

While praising the attempt to repair "our broken immigration system," Kendell added, "It is unacceptable that low-income immigrants and families will be barred from accessing the benefits of the [Affordable Care Act], Medicaid, and CHIP for 10 years." She added, "While we are extremely troubled that the current bill excludes UAFAs principles, we remain confident that we will be able to add protections for same-sex binational couples to the final version of the bill."

iO ut!

BY TANIA UNZUETA CARRASCO

Coming Out as a Deportee

If Juan Carlos Vera had not come out as a person in deportation proceedings, today he would be living in Mexico. Although Vera is not queer, his story is relevant because it was the strategies developed by LGBT immigrant youth that were able to get him out.

Vera, 25, has lived in Chicago most of his life, and in March found himself inside a detention center just outside of Woodstock, Ill. He was in detention because, on what he thought was his first day of work, the human resource person at a local factory was actually setting him up to be turned over to the police department, for allegedly using false documents. When the police suspected he was also an undocumented immigrant, he was placed in immigration detention and in deportation proceedings.

Vera's case is not unique. Going by last year's numbers, President Obama's administration deports more than 1,100 people every day, for a total, record-breaking 409,000 according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

According to the President's own poli-

law, either to eat or just survive. But unless you are also undocumented or a permanent legal resident, you didn't get deported from your country.

As a response, in 2009 groups of undocumented young people around the country began to organize against deportations, by creative, aggressive and technologically savvy campaigns for individual cases.

Nationally, Prerna Lal and Mohammad Abdolahi, two LGBT undocumented youth, co-founded DreamActivist, a national organization arguably running some of the most successful campaigns against deportations of hundreds of individuals. In Chicago, we had our own version with the organization co-founded by local queer organizer Reyna Wences, an undocumented ally Rigo Padilla, and myself. The Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL) was created precisely out of the need to stop Padilla's deportation, and has since helped get dozens of undocumented people out of detention.

The strategies that have stopped these deportations here in Illinois and around

the country are based on the idea that it makes a difference when people tell their own stories, it matters when people are out, and it matters when communities listen and respond. Once individuals and their families decide to make their case public, and come out as people facing deportation, community members mobilize to bring attention to the case from the media, legisla-

"And although each one of us holds the decisions we make each day, for undocumented immigrants, the consequences are systematically and legally disproportional from the action."

ties, the people placed in deportation are only those who fall within the set priorities. As outlined by DHS, the three top priority categories are: "criminal aliens," "egregious immigration violators," and "recent border crossers." By keeping people who fall within these out of the country, we are supposed to be both safe and content with the knowledge that 'good' people are not being deported.

Yet in immigrant communities, the stories of family separation are heard every day, and their stories are much more complicated than the categories allow.

For example, a "criminal alien" could be someone with one Driving Under the Influence charge, a solicitation charge, or three misdemeanors of any kind. An "immigration violator" is someone who has been deported in the past and come back, for example, to be with their children; or anyone who has been stopped by immigration enforcement at the border.

I have heard each of these stories in the span of a month. And although each one of us holds the decisions we make each day, for undocumented immigrants, the consequences are systematically and legally disproportional from the action. I wonder how many of my readers, for example, have not driven home after a night of drinking out at the bar, or taken actions that are technically against the

tors, and DHS.

For Vera's case, advocates were able to get the support of federal elected officials and community organizations, sent more than 800 emails to immigration, and made dozens of calls asking for his release from detention.

Although there is no guarantee, each time we have learned that when DHS knows that the public is paying attention, and there is public pressure, they cave. And even if it is because they just don't want to look bad, these campaigns result in people getting out of detention and in their deportations being stopped.

As there are national conversations about immigration reform, we have yet to deal with the question of what happens with the people who will continue to be deported. The Obama administration promises that the numbers will remain in the hundreds of thousands.

For me, it is in this context that fighting these public cases becomes that much more relevant. You see, although we are only stopping that one deportation, we are creating strong communities that understand that we must come out in order to break down the myths and distortions. If you are undocumented, or in deportation proceedings, come out. If you are not, this is your turn to listen, and take action.

Tania Unzueta is co-founder of IYJL and an organizer at the National Day Laborer Organizing Network. Follow her on twitter at @_LaTania.



Students perform at Night of Noise. Photo by Jamie Anne Royce. See more photos online at www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Night-of-Noise-celebrates-youth-activism-to-combat-bullying/42466.html

In Loop, students make noise about bullying

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

Chicago-area LGBT youth and their supporters gathered at Thompson Center Plaza April 19 for Night of Noise to commemorate Day of Silence.

Every year, thousands of students take a vow of silence to call attention to the silencing effect of anti-LGBT bullying and harassment in schools. Locally coordinated by the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance—an advocacy group promoting safety, support and healthy development for LGBT students—Night of Noise serves as the culminating event to celebrate breaking that silence.

Following a youth speakout, organizers passed out petitions supporting advocacy for transgender and gender-nonconforming youth in Chicago public schools. The event also featured youth performances by the Lyons Township Steppers, spoken word by Daniel Hale Williams, drag performances by Leila Deluxe, and music by Anabelle Daily and Kata Bel Air. A dance party closed Night of Noise.

Youth organizers touted ally support as one of the most powerful aspects of Day of Silence, citing that many of the students who remain silent that day are not themselves LGBT people.

“Once I came out, I didn’t know a lot of people like me. I didn’t feel a lot of harassment, but I didn’t want other people to feel harassment,” said Joel Deleon, a youth committee member of the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. “Day of Silence makes people realize that there are a lot of students who support the LGBT community.”

Many youth participating in the event are

working on individual projects in their school districts, like anti-bullying training for faculty and staff or instituting a GSA student group.

“Night of Noise brings youth together to celebrate all the work they did for Day of Silence,” said Shannon Sullivan, executive director of Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. “It says a lot about young people making things better right now and not waiting for things to get better.”

This year, the Legacy Project (<http://legacy-projectchicago.org>) teamed with the Alliance and youth organizers to supply educators with LGBT history teaching materials, to combat anti-gay bullying by directly confronting the ignorance that makes it possible.

“I haven’t been personally harassed, but I know people who have. I’ve been bullied not for my sexual orientation but for other things,” said Katya Mazon, a youth committee member of the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. “If I can prevent others from feeling the way I’ve felt, I want to do that.”

LGBT youth of color also had a significant presence in organizing and attending the Night of Noise, which youth leaders attributed to the intersecting oppressions of race and sexual orientation.

“Sometimes the harassment hits the youth of color the hardest,” said Mazon.

“If you’re a minority, you know what it’s like to be different from everyone else you see like you, and the LGBT community feels that too,” said Deleon.

See www.illinoissafeschools.org.

New Zealand passes marriage equality

Hundreds of gay-rights advocates celebrated at New Zealand’s Parliament April 17 as the country become the 13th in the world—and the first in the Asia-Pacific region—to legalize same-sex marriage, according to the Washington Post.

Legislators approved the measure 77-44 on its third and final reading. Bill sponsor Louisa Wall said, “In our society, the meaning of marriage is universal—it’s a declaration of love and commitment to a special person,” adding that “nothing could make me more proud to be a New Zealander than passing this bill.”

Since 2005, New Zealand has allowed civil unions, which bestow many legal rights upon same-sex couples. However, the new law will allow gay and lesbian couples to jointly adopt children and will allow their marriages to be recognized in other countries. The law will take effect in late August.

GLAAD honors Bill Clinton

Harvey Weinstein and Jennifer Lawrence presented former President Bill Clinton with the Advocate for Change Award at the 24th Annual GLAAD Media Awards, held April 20 in Los Angeles, according to a press release.

A video of Clinton accepting the award and speaking against the Defense of Marriage Act is at www.glaad.org/blog/video-president-bill-clinton-speaks-out-against-domaglaadawards.

The film *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and the NBC series *The New Normal* were among the honorees in 10 of the 33 media categories. Among other recipients were the Fox show *Raising Hope* (for outstanding indi-

vidual episode) and Oprah’s *Next Chapter* (for outstanding talk-show episode). In addition, singer Kelly Rowland performed.

Pro-LGBT group attends naturalization event

Members of Uniting America (UA) were among those who attended an April 17 citizenship naturalization ceremony with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The event took place at the Harold Washington Library. Among those who spoke were Emanuel and Brian Bannon, the openly gay commissioner of the Chicago Public Library.

Uniting America (UA) is a project of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. A UA fellow is placed in the Lambda Legal Midwest Region Office in Chicago to help connect the LGBT community with the immigrant community.

If members of the LGBTQ community would like to get involved, contact UA Fellow Luis Roman at lroman@icirr.org or contact the Lambda Legal office at 312-663-4413. Photo courtesy of Roman



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LGBT suicide-prevention symposium held at NMH

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) hosted an LGBT suicide-prevention symposium at Northwestern Memorial Hospital's (NMH's) Feinberg School of Medicine April 20.

About 100 people gathered to hear leaders in the field of mental health and the LGBT community present information on suicide prevention and survivor support within the LGBT community.

Mike McRaith, director of the Federal Insurance Office (FIO) of the U.S. and AFSP board member, gave the opening address. As director of the FIO, McRaith is responsible for monitoring all aspects of the insurance sector as well as coordinating federal efforts and developing federal policy on international insurance matters. He also serves as an advisor to the Secretary of the Treasury on domestic and international insurance issues.

McRaith praised the work that the AFSP does and shared that he is a survivor of loss by suicide. McRaith explained that his boyfriend of two years, Eric Myers, committed suicide in the summer of 1996. To cope with the loss, McRaith saw a therapist, however, the pain of Myers' suicide hasn't left him, McRaith noted. After Myers' suicide McRaith said he received a lot of support from family members and friends. "What's more important than you not being alone [as a survivor of loss by suicide] is that we are in this together," said McRaith.

Then Dr. Brian Mustanski, AFSP grant recipient and director of Northwestern's IMPACT Center, spoke about the IMPACT program and then shared the results of various LGBT suicide prevention research studies. In his presentation, Mustanski said that suicide completion is the third leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults adding that LGBT youth are one population that has a greater risk for suicide completion.

One study, Mustanski explained, showed that mental and addictive disorders, hopelessness and early puberty are factors that increase the risk of suicide among LGBT youth. "Some studies have linked younger age at 'coming out' and being more 'out' to family and community to increased suicidal attempts while others have found the opposite effect," said Mustanski.

Other studies showed that victimization, gender non-conformity and social policies that are unsupportive increase risk for suicide among LGBT youth, according to Mustanski. The priorities for reducing suicide risk among LGBT youth is lessening victimization and increasing support for LGBT youth, supporting healthy romantic relationships and improving social acceptance and supportive social policies, noted Mustanski.

Brother Michael Oboza—Orthodox Catholic Eastern Rite monastic, founder of Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago and the first bisexual liaison to the Center on Halsted—spoke about bisexual equality and suicide prevention. Many people don't understand or won't accept that bisexuals exist within and outside of the LGBT community, noted Oboza. Studies show that bisexuals struggle at a higher percentage than their gay, lesbian and straight counterparts, Oboza remarked. Then Oboza talked about his suicide attempt at the age of 31. He also shared the stories of four bisexual individuals (Bill Clayton, August Provost, Anthony Stubbs and Kitty McGuire) who committed suicide. As Oboza told their stories, he held up their picture and then ripped the picture in half, symbolizing their deaths.

In his remarks Dr. Al Estock, survivor of loss by suicide and Out of the Darkness Chicago and Community Walk participant, shared that he has known multiple people who have died by suicide including his partner Warren Merz in 2008. Estock noted that Merz was reluctant to seek help due to the stigma associated with mental issues and suicidal thoughts. "Prior to and following Warren's death, I lived my life with my own ignorance about suicide and mental health challenges ... I am still trying to educate myself," said Estock. He shared that he too thought about committing suicide following Merz's death.

Presenting people who commit suicide in a negative light results in preventing people most at risk from seeking help or communicating their thoughts and plans, Estock remarked. Estock shared that the way to change people's attitudes is to talk openly about suicide and educate people about suicide using anti-stigma messages, anti-stigma training and anti-stigma lobbying campaigns.

The day also featured a number of panel discussions. The "Throughout Life" panel speakers were Brigid O'Shaughnessy, founder and executive artistic director of Erasing the Distance; Britta Larson, senior services director for the Center on Halsted's SAGE program; Lara Brooks, director of Howard Brown Health Center's Broadway Youth Center; and Lashawnda Carter, outreach coordinator of the National Runaway Safe-line.

Speakers for the "Law" panel included James



Standing (from left): Lashawnda Carter and Brigid O'Shaughnessy; sitting (from left): Lara Brooks and Britta Larson. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

L. Bennett, regional director of Lambda Legal; Lori Fox of Out and Equal; Illinois State Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-14th); and Steve Moore, legislative advocacy committee chairperson of the AFSP.

Representing the perspective of the "Media" were panelists Matthew Breen, editor-in-chief of the Advocate Magazine; Tracy Baim, publisher and executive editor at Windy City Media Group; and Adrienne Williams, bisexual writer and from the AFSP Media Watchers Group.

"Community Resources" was the subject of the final panel for the day. Krista Walker of Youth Outlook; Lawrence Carter, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance GSA network coordinator; and Simon Chavez, AFSP LGBT Outreach Committee co-chairperson were the featured speakers.

See www.afsp.org/local-chapters/find-your-local-chapter/illinois for more information.

Note: More details on some of the panels will be reported in upcoming editions of WCT.

City LGBT/women's council still unformed

BY KATE SOSIN

After more than a year of silence on the formation of an advisory council budgeted by the city to address LGBT and women's issues, some have begun to suspect that council will be cut. However, city officials say they are working to the fill the council.

The Advisory Council on LGBT/ Women's Issues is the last council to start meeting after the 2012 city budget dramatically reduced the city's identity-based councils from eight to just three.

Before 2012, Chicago had the Advisory Council on LGBT Issues and a mayoral liaison who directed the council. That council oversaw the city's Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame each year (the Hall of Fame now exists as a separate entity).

When the councils were reduced in 2012, the LGBT council was replaced by a joint LGBT and women's council, and members of both groups were dismissed in favor of new appointments.

But after two budgets and more than a year without the council, some have begun to question if the council will return at all.

Eve Rodriguez, assistant press secretary to Mayor Emanuel, said in a statement to Windy City Times that the council will be convened.

"Regarding the Advisory Council on Women

and LGBT, Mayor Emanuel's senior staff and department heads reflect the diversity of the city, with high-ranking LGBT Chicagoans in the Mayor's Office and every department," Rodriguez wrote. "All parts of government continue to actively coordinate with the LGBT community, and will continue to do so until this position is filled."

Pressed further on whether the full council would be appointed, Rodriguez said the city is "actively working on filling it."

Ald. Joe Moore, chairman of the Chicago Council on Human Relations, said that he has yet to receive appointments for the council from the mayor's office.

Asked if he knew if the council would be formed, he said, "Well, it's part of the budget."

Moore said he would be following up with the mayor's office on the timeline of appointments.

The 2011 dissolution of the city's volunteer Advisory Council on LGBT Issues was strongly opposed by longtime LGBT activists. The Council on Veteran's Issues was not dissolved in that budget and continued to meet. The councils on African, Arab, Asian, Immigrant and Refugee and Latino Issues were dissolved and replaced with one "Equity" council.

The Equity council is in its third month in operation. That council is headed by Arnold Romeo, who previously directed the African council.

It's still early, said Romeo, but so far, his combined council is working fine.

"The thing about the Equity council is that it brings four communities with issues that have had a disparate impact, it brings those communities together," said Romeo.

Rodriguez previously told Windy City Times that the appointments would likely follow the hiring of the director position, budgeted at \$86,796. The city, however, has not announced a hire. Before the change in councils, Bill Greaves was head of the LGBT area, but he lost his job as part of these changes.

The Commission on Human Relations, which oversees the councils, is not entirely without LGBT representation. Mona Noriega, a lesbian who has a long track record on LGBT issues, currently heads the commission.

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
AARON JACKSON
OF EQUALITY HOUSE

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LAWYER from cover

“part of my DNA.”

She continued, “I also believe that its important for those who’ve had good fortune in our lives to reach out to those folks who have been less fortunate, or who maybe need a hand up, and in public service, you can do tremendous amounts of good for people.”

Although Massillon shaped Lightfoot’s ethics, and no doubt its football fever helped the University of Chicago Law School student/quarterback lead her intramural team to an undefeated and even unscored upon season, there were some things small-town life did not prepare her for. “Let’s just say I fully embraced who I am when I was in college,” she said.

“My parents have always been very supportive, and my siblings have, as well,” Lightfoot said, regarding her sexuality. “But by that time, I felt like I was [an] adult. [Still,] this was in the ‘80’s, so it was still a scary time, there weren’t many public role models—certainly none that I grew up with in my town in Ohio—so I think like every kid who is embracing who they are, you worry about how you’ll be perceived, whether you’ll be accepted, both from your family and also from people that are close to you, but I’ve been very fortunate in that regard.”

After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1984 with a B.A. in Political Science, Lightfoot worked on Capitol Hill, and ultimately decided to forgo pursuing a PhD in history or poly sci in favor law because, she told WCT, “I thought about it as an opportunity not only to do some good, but to have something that I could stand on my own two feet and have a decent belief in myself.”

By 1989, Lightfoot had a law degree in hand, and her summer internship work had so impressed the partners at the Chicago office of Mayer Brown—one of the 10 largest law firms in the world—they made her an offer of employment. For the next five years, Lightfoot earned her reputation as, to quote Chicago’s Law Department spokesman Roderick Drew, “a first-rate trial lawyer.”

The official Mayer Brown biography cites Lightfoot as “a trial attorney, investigator and risk manager,” and recognizes that “[both] as a civil litigator and as Assistant US Attorney in the Criminal Division of the US Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Illinois (1996–2002), Lori has tried over 20 federal and state jury and bench trials.” The cases Lightfoot were tasked with ran the gamut from prosecuting a serial arsonist, a murderer, and even an alderman, one Virgil Jones, implicated in the Silver Shovel bribery and corruption scandal.

Lightfoot told WCT, “After I left the U.S. attorney’s office for working at [the city’s Office of Professional Standards (OPS), now known as the Independent Police Review Authority], I seemed to have a knack for solving difficult problems and I got called upon by people that recognized my work.”

Where the clientele at Mayer Brown included most of the Fortune 500 companies, at OPS, as she had at the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Lightfoot would be looking out for the interests of the 99 percent, leading her 100-person office into investigations of misconduct alleged against the Chicago Police. In a 2009 interview, Lightfoot stated the greatest challenge of that unenviable task was “walking a difficult line between maintaining the integrity of the department and handling complaints against it.”

Lightfoot confided to WCT, “I worked for very good people, and it was a very interesting and challenging time, an exciting time to be in the city, and I’ve never shirked from a challenge.”

Some of those challenges during Lightfoot’s three-year tenure with Chicago included the Herculean “total redesign” of the Department of Procurement Services’ minority and women owned enterprise (M/WBE) certification program in the wake of a federal investigation.

“You may recall,” she said, “but we went in at

a time when James Duff was being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for creating a sham women-owned business, so it was in that atmosphere that we went in to right the ship.”

The Associated Press reported in 2005 that Duff “had pleaded guilty to racketeering, mail fraud, money laundering and other offenses that victimized programs designed to ensure that companies operated by women and minorities get a share of city contracts. He admitted landing \$120 million in such contracts by claiming that his 76-year-old mother and a Black friend were running companies that he controlled.” He was sentenced to 9-years and 10 months, and ordered to pay over \$22 million.

The ideal behind M/WBE, according to Lightfoot, “is to help create business opportunities for disadvantaged businesses, by that, meaning that are owned by women, people of color, people who have disabilities, veterans, for the purpose of trying to give them the opportunity to be a part of the thriving economic culture of whatever community it is.”

Lightfoot recalled that at the time “there were a lot of questions and challenges to the viability of the program, both on the certification, but also concerned that there were entities being certified that actually weren’t women owned, or minority owned, or disadvantaged businesses, and then on the back end, making sure that if a contractor committed to participation by one of these businesses, that the businesses actually got the benefit of that bargain. So, I was responsible for a complete redesign of that program both on the certification end, and in putting in a process to safeguard the contracts that were met, to make sure there was compliance with the contractual responsibilities that the general contractors took on.”

In less than a year’s time, Lightfoot, as interim first deputy procurement officer, had accom-

plished her goals to “right the ship” of both the program and the department. When she rejoined Mayer Brown in September 2005, it would be as partner.

Where the city had once employed Lightfoot to investigate allegations of police misconduct, it would call upon her in the private sector to defend the department, notably in 2006 when four men alleged they had been beaten outside a bar by off-duty cops. The Chicago Tribune noted, “The department was cleared, but four of the six officers were found to be at fault.”

More recently, Lightfoot was brought in last December by Mayor Rahm Emmanuel to head counsel for the long-delayed Christina Eilman case, in which a bipolar woman pleaded for help while in police custody (Wentworth District), as did her parents in California via repeated telephone calls to the precinct, was called a “white bitch” by black officers, was released from police custody near the Robert Taylor Homes, was subsequently raped by a gang member who reportedly boasted, “I’m gonna show this bitch who the real killa is,” and was either pushed or fell out of seven-story window. Though she survived, she is permanently disabled, both mentally and physically. The case was set to go to trial Jan. 21, but was settled weeks before, with the city awarding Eilman’s family \$22.5 million which will go toward her lifelong care.

Lightfoot made no comment to the media while she was assigned to the case, and when asked by WCT if she was satisfied with the verdict, responded, “Well, that’s not for me to say. My client is satisfied. That’s what’s important.”

The involvement of Lightfoot in the high-profile case made headlines in part because she threw her hat into the ring to be considered for the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, a post held by Patrick Fitzgerald for nearly 11 years, before stepping down in June

2012.

“I was interested in the position,” she recounted, “because of the challenges of the city of Chicago in our area faces, whether its gangs, guns, homicide, or the area of white collar crime or other issues that fell into federal jurisdiction. The position had a tremendous opportunity to really, fundamentally impact the quality of life for the citizens of this district for years to come, so it was something that excited me to have an opportunity to be considered for that position.”

In an unusual move, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) sent four nominees, all employees at high-profile law firms, for review and ultimate nomination by the White House, telling the Chicago Tribune, “These are all four quality people.” Lightfoot joined Jonathan Bunge, Zach Fardon, and Gil Soffer on Durbin’s short list.

Though she was no stranger to the Beltway, Lightfoot admitted, “Coming from where I came from, which is a pretty humble background, being interviewed by U.S. Senators, being interviewed by folks at the White House, is a pretty humbling and honorable experience.”

Unfortunately, word came from Washington in March that Lightfoot was no longer in the running, though she says she was “honored to have been considered.”

Looking forward, Lightfoot said, “I’ll continue to do what I’ve done the rest of my career, which is serve my clients and serve my community. I’m on a number of different boards, there’s a lot of things that interest me, and I’ll continue to pursue them.”

In almost every news report about Lightfoot’s nomination, it was mentioned she would have been the first female, and the first African-American to be Chicago’s chief federal prosecutor. It should be noted she would also have been the first lesbian. Lightfoot is currently “in a long-term relationship with a lovely woman, and we have a 5-year-old daughter.”

When asked how she viewed herself in this label-obsessed age, she simply stated, “I view myself as me. Obviously, I’m an amalgam of all the things I am and I’m mindful of the fact that I hit many demographic buttons. But I think of myself, and also as I think most people do, as a holistic person.”

When talking about the satisfaction of mentoring young lawyers and law students, Lightfoot returned to this point, saying, “I recognize that I serve as a role model for a wide variety of people. That’s very satisfying. And obviously that status comes with a lot of responsibility, as well, and I fully embrace it.”

The passion in Lightfoot’s voice noticeably alights when discussing the very young, from showing “no tolerance” for bullies, to ensuring that adults dealing with youth are mindful of warning signs, and are creating safe places where kids can express themselves.

“I think the challenge for us is to reach out to kids, in particular, who are different in whatever way, and make sure that they feel valued,” she said. “I’m sure you’re aware of the fact that there is still a huge homeless population among gay kids. There’s still a significant suicide rate among our youth, and its important they can see their future beyond whatever their immediate circumstances are.”

Lori Lightfoot grew up in a small town during a time when there were no lesbian role models, yet a generation later has been invited back to be honored as a distinguished citizen.

“I’m happy that we live in a time where there are so many opportunities opening up for people like me,” she told WCT. “We can never forget the struggles, particularly as a woman of color, as a lesbian, I never forget that. I know there are going to be people out there who only see that, and only see it in a negative way. I’m heartened by the fact that we are living in a time in this country where we’re seeing that people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, have more of an opportunity to live their lives without restriction, without being judged negatively, and that’s inspiring.”

Repeal of HIV notification law heads to state Senate

BY KATE SOSIN

An Illinois bill that would repeal an HIV-notification law is headed for a full Senate vote after the bill passed committee.

HB61 would remove a longstanding mandate that health officials notify school principals about HIV-positive students. State law currently allows a principal can share a student’s HIV-positive status with other teachers and staff. HB61 would make that notification illegal, removing HIV statuses from permanent school records.

AIDS advocates have long held that HIV notification laws increase stigma and discrimination.

John Peller, vice president of policy for AIDS Foundation of Chicago, said that stigma in schools as a result of notification laws singles out HIV-positive students.

“We have also had situations where school staff have treated students differently because they have HIV,” Peller said.

Peller argued that even when the law was enacted more than two decades ago, students were not at risk of contracting HIV in schools. A fact sheet put out by AFC further states that fear of having an HIV-status shared can deter young people from getting tested.

AIDS advocates applauded the bill’s passage out of committee. They said that the repeal of the law brings Illinois into line with the rest of the country.

“We are so pleased that this bill again received bi-partisan support in the Senate committee,” said Ann Fisher, executive director of AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, in a statement. “Iris Martinez, the Senate sponsor, did a great job in response to sometimes hostile questioning, repeatedly reminding the com-

mittee that Illinois is the only state with a principal-notification requirement and that the requirement makes high-risk teens much less likely to get HIV testing and treatment.”

According to the statement put out by AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, local groups have been working for years to repeal the law.

The bill has already passed the House. House sponsors included openly gay Reps. Greg Harris, Kelly Cassidy and Deb Mell.

Gerber/Hart sets move-in date

BY KATE SOSIN

Chicago’s LGBT library will move in to its new home this month, according to a message sent to community members.

The Gerber/Hart Library and Archives is poised to begin moving into its Rogers Park space April 30, the email states.

The library has been closed for more than a year, after it moved from Edgewater to an unfinished location. The move came amid accusations that the library’s board of directors had shut out community participation. Former President Karen Sendziak stepped down during that controversy but remains on the board.

Board development has since been a priority for the library.

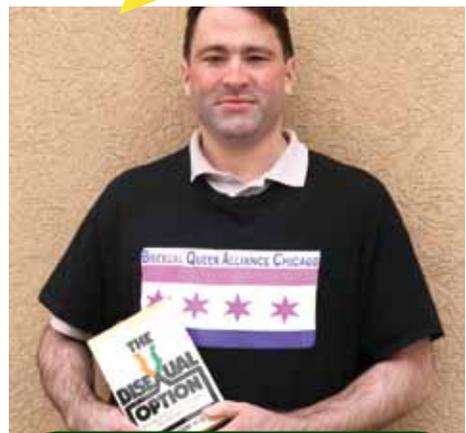
LGBT leaders, including historians and former board members, have been anxious to see the library reopen after more than a year. The reopening date has repeatedly been pushed back while the build-out is completed.

The library oversees a large archival collection as well as thousands of books.

At a February community meeting, head librarian Steph Potter said the reopening after the move will depend on volunteer support.

The library will employ Carney McNicholas, an Ohio-based moving company that specializes in library relocations.

GAY *in the*
LIFE
Br. Michael C. Oboza
TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Age
37

Relationship status
"Single and looking"

Job title
Bisexual radical activist monk and president of Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago

Hobbies
Singing, dating and learning

Favorite movie
Kinsey

Little-known fact
"I am religious, spiritual, atheist and agnostic. I am a little bit of everything."

Br. Michael C. Oboza has admitted he waged a long internal battle to figure out "how straight or gay" he assumed he had to be.

Instead, he's bisexual—and he works daily with others identified by the "B" in the LGBT community.

"I knew I had butterflies for two classmates from kindergarten to seventh-grade at the same time. That's eight years. [Being bisexual is] not a phase. And it took exploring being gay and straight for over 30 years to accept my butterflies; my bisexual birthright is real and exists," he said.

Oboza said the best part of his job is "meeting other out and closeted bisexuals" on a daily basis. The worst part is, "knowing bisexuals who have attempted or committed suicide from biphobia."

Oboza is an Orthodox Catholic Eastern Rite monastic. He has received accolades from The Love Foundation, Inc., and the Southern Poverty Law Center for his dedication to confronting biphobia while organizing bisexual programming at the Center on Halsted in Lakeview. He also was a key member of the community working to organize and host "Celebrate Bisexuality Day" at the Center in 2010 and 2011.

Oboza secured the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations Advisory Council on LGBT Issues' endorsement of San Francisco's "Bisexual Invisibility: Impacts and Recommendations" report, receiving 2011 the Michael Page Award from the Marin Foundation for his efforts.

He founded the Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago (BQAC) in 2010, and has been integral confronting homophobia in churches regarding same-sex blessings, and was the first open bisexual selection and host committee for the Legacy Project Chicago.

He also is the senior editor for Our Fence, a Chicago-based bisexual newsletter.

"I have a pure heart. The most difficult part is feeling of not doing enough for the bisexual community," Oboza said. "Being bi is all about my work. That's the awesome part. I am bisexual and don't have to closet myself regarding my life's work with Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago."

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VIEWPOINTS

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 Community Marketing, Inc.



**ROBERT H.
NEUBERT**

AIDS remembered

The following is the speech given by Robert H. Neubert, director of catering sales at Hilton Chicago, in accepting the AIDS Foundation of Chicago Lori Kaufman Volunteer Award at the 2013 AFC gala April 18.

So what do you get when you cross an interior designer with a Broadway producer? For me, it was my introduction to this life-changing organization.

I first met Broadway producer Mary Lu Roffe and interior designer John Ansehl about 15 years ago. This dynamic duo came to me as co-chairs for an upcoming Not Just Song & Dance gala benefiting the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Being in the party booking business, I of course jumped at the chance to sign a contract with a new client. Well, our deal got done, and in time, planning was underway.

Now, working in the events world, I come in daily contact with many worthwhile charities and philanthropic organizations.

However in working with the AIDS Foundation, I soon came to realize that this particular organization had a very personal connection calling out to me. My early role as their event business partner quickly evolved to include service as a volunteer, and before long, as a board member. David Munar, Mark Ishaug, Casey Klarich, Mike

Dilbeck and many others here tonight, became extended family.

You see, 34 years ago—in our much younger days—my partner Barry and I were living in New York pursuing theatrical careers.

These were also the earliest days of AIDS—so early, in fact, that many doctors had little to no knowledge of what they struggled to diagnose. Painfully, more than a few doctors understood quite well, but refused to administer patient care.

Other, more compassionate doctors consulted with specialists but ultimately made surrendered referrals on behalf of their dying patients.

As time went on, I sadly lost friends, neighbors, colleagues and even a few employers—because in those days, diagnosis was a death sentence.

In 1981, I got to speak with seven-time Tony Award-winning choreographer-director Michael Bennett, as a guest at his opening night cast party for Dreamgirls. In 1987, Michael Bennett was gone at age 44. On the night of his death, the cast of A Chorus Line in performing the show's final number "One Singular Sensation" changed a simple pronoun from "She" to "He's ... the one." Broadway was forever changed.

One of my frequent diners back in my early Manhattan restaurant years was the high-living, often despised and yes, bigger than life Roy Cohn, whose prominence, personal celebrity and political influence is now forever captured as the AIDS-afflicted attorney in Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning play Angels in America. In 1986, Roy Cohn was gone as well. In spite of fame, wealth and even great power, AIDS took its prisoners.

Decades later what started for me as a personal fight in remembrance of lost friends, continues on today as a worldwide epidemic. This

remarkable organization however has turned my earlier anger and bitterness to a more positive beacon for hope and change. For while we are on the cusp of an AIDS-free generation, every day 1,000 children are newly infected with HIV.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimates that there are more than 1 million people living with HIV in the United States alone, and that one in every five is not even aware that they carry an infection. Someone in the U.S. is newly infected every 10 minutes.

Gratefully, I stopped losing personal friends more than 20 years ago, but to the more than 34 million adults and children living with HIV and AIDS globally, the numbers are very different. Less than half of those eligible for life-saving treatment ever receive it.

So while I am very, very grateful to all of you for this inspiring honor and recognition, tonight's award is not for me, but is instead accepted on behalf of those whose voice has been silenced. It is accepted on behalf of those who will never receive the benefit of live-saving treatment.

But it is also accepted with optimistic hope for millions worldwide and it is especially accepted with triumphant thanks for our many friends who survived the fight and remain with us today.

Volunteering is easy. Writing checks is easy. Being a part of World of Chocolate, of Dance for Life, of doing the AIDS Run & Walk, these are all easy. But we still need help.

We can and we will, beat this disease.

On behalf of my fellow board members, our President and CEO David Munar, our tireless, passionate staff and our thousands of dedicated volunteers at AFC—and yes, for those who depend on our efforts to survive—I ask you to please ... help us change the story.



**DANA
RUDOLPH**

MOMBIAN

Finding hope in Boston

I never thought I'd be writing about tragedy again so soon. The Boston Marathon bombing on April 15 was yet another blow to my already damaged sense of security as a parent, coming as it did only four months after the shooting massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. What hope do we have of our children growing up in a world without fear of events like these?

I am a Boston-area resident and a lifelong New Englander. As it happened, my spouse and I had spent the better part of Sunday, April 14, walking around Copley Square in Boston, where the race ends, noting the crowd-control barricades already in place for the next day. In past years, I have been part of the Wellesley College "scream tunnel" that cheers the runners as they pass the campus. I have been grateful for the many who run the marathon in support of Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where my father was treated several times. The marathon has long signified strength, courage, and Bay State spirit to me. The bombing felt like a desecration.

My 9-year-old son is old enough to know about the tragedy, but still young enough for my spouse and me to skip over some of the details. With him, I have emphasized my pride in the way our city came together after the bombing, both at the scene and during the later hunt for the suspects. What surprised me, though, was how quick he was to associate Newtown and the

marathon bombing. When we explained that we didn't know why people did the bombing, he said, "Just like that shooting in Connecticut." I don't want my son growing up fearing that kind of random violence—and yet I remind myself that bombings and gun violence are common for many children, in war-torn countries around the world and in parts of our own country.

Even as we heal from the events in Boston, therefore, I hope we as a country work towards peace and security both at home and around the world.

That is why I am appalled that in other news last week, the U.S. Senate rejected a bill for stricter background checks on gun purchases. They flouted a groundswell of public support for such a measure in the wake of the Newtown shooting, and ignored the approximately 3,500 gun deaths in the United States since then (according to Slate magazine).

Neither suspect in the Boston bombing had a permit to carry the guns they used in their shootouts with authorities, reported the Boston Globe.

The Senate's inaction horrifies me—and yet, it underscores just how fraught with political consequence it is to address violence—both gun violence and terrorism. How do we protect people while guaranteeing individual liberties? To what extent do individual liberties extend to owning assault weapons that can do grievous and widespread harm to other individuals? How do we search for perpetrators of violence without making assumptions based on race, ethnicity, class, or religion? How do we assure that their apprehension doesn't cast a pall over others who share those parts of their identity? One's answers to those questions often define one's place on the political spectrum—although "spectrum" implies a sense of gradation that seems to exist less and less in our polarized society.

It feels as if our country has reached "Heartbreak Hill," the Boston Marathon's notoriously difficult ascent. The hill is not all that steep

compared with much Massachusetts geography, but it comes late in the race, when exhaustion has begun to set in, and has ended the dreams of many runners.

I think our country may have reached its own "Heartbreak Hill" when it comes to violence. We have become so daunted by it that some, like the Senate, cannot find it within themselves to finish the race.

Heartbreak Hill's past, however, may provide a glimpse of the future. The incline got its name in 1936 when defending champion Johnny Kelley passed Tarzan Brown there, giving Brown a pat on the back as he went by. Brown took offense and found the drive to win. Boston Globe sports editor Jerry Nason "saw it as the turning point of the race and dubbed it 'Heartbreak Hill,'" reported the Globe in 1993.

Has the U.S. Senate given us the patronizing pat on the back we need to rally and address gun violence in our country? Has the Boston bombing—a pat on the back from those who did it, flouting the efforts made since 9/11 to stop such acts—given us the incentive to put aside partisan politics and address the issues that may lead to other forms of violence and terrorism, both at home and around the world?

Time will tell. But I hope we have reached a point where people are ready to say "Enough." Where we parents are tired of fearing for our children every time we send them to school or take them to a sporting or entertainment venue. Where we will make it clear to politicians that our concern for our children trumps their concern for their seat or for lobbyists' money.

It will be an uphill struggle. But if there's one lesson the Boston Marathon has taught us, it's that such struggles can be overcome.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), an award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBT parents.

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo from Paramount Pictures

ARMS SUMMIT

From left: Dwayne Johnson, Anthony Mackie and Mark Wahlberg star as bodybuilders in the film Pain & Gain. Read page 16.

CALENDAR

Foster the people.
Page 20

Photo from Bon Foster 2011
by Kat Fitzgerald



THEATER

'Mine' field.
Page 12

Photo from Comrades Mine
by Tom McGrath



SPORTS

Into the pool.
Page 22

Photo courtesy of the Smelts



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Local theater: About Face, 'Fall' and more

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

"Theatre is so gay!" That's an advertising slogan once used by About Face Theatre, Chicago's preeminent company devoted to LGBTQ theater. It not only played on the politically incorrect put-down used by so many teenagers, but accurately touched on the fact that there is a large lavender contingent of people working in the theater community. This week's column focuses on the plethora of LGBTQ news and productions around town:

A new head for About Face

About Face Theatre Company announced that Andrew Volkoff is the troupe's new artistic director. Volkoff, an associate artistic director of Barrington Stage Company in Massachusetts and Genesis Theatre Group in New York City, is set to succeed outgoing artistic director Bonnie Metzgar this spring.

"In About Face, I saw an organization founded in strong LGBTQ tradition by Eric Rosen and Kyle Hall, strengthened under the leadership of Bonnie Metzgar and currently positioned for expansion and change," Volkoff said in a statement. "I look forward to collaborating with AFT's talented group of artistic associates as well as other local and national artists to support and amplify AFT's mission of creating innovative works that tell our numerous, diverse stories."

Volkoff will be publicly introduced at About Face Theatre's gala Wonka Ball 2013: Circus Maximus, at 7 p.m. Friday, April 26, at Architectural Artifacts, 4325 N. Ravenswood Ave. Visit www.aboutfacetheatre.com.

Next Fall finally in Chicago

It has taken an unconscionable long time for the Tony Award-nominated play Next Fall to make it to Chicago. Geoffrey Nauffts' drama premiered off-Broadway to critical acclaim in 2009, and then transferred to Broadway in 2010 with Elton John and his husband David Furnish as leading producers, no less.

"I was surprised that no other Chicago theaters picked it up and that it fell under the radar," said Derek Bertelsen, who is directing the Windy City debut of Next Fall for AstonRep Theatre Company. "But it's been a blessing and I'm so grateful to be finally able to do this play that I feel so strongly about."

Playwright Nauffts, who is artistic director of the New York-based theater company Naked Angels and a former writer on the TV series Brothers and Sisters, drew from his fascination with religion and from his personal experiences to write Next Fall.

"The inspiration really was about having met someone and fallen in love and the person was a Christian and that was the last thing I expected," said Nauffts, who adds that he wasn't really raised in a religious home. "That was a jumping off point and about three years into our relationship I started to think what would happen in our situation if, God forbid, something terrible would happen and be a wake-up call."

Over time, Nauffts crafted Next Fall into a memory play. It involves a gay couple named Adam and Luke with stark religious differences—Luke is a devout Christian and Adam is an atheist.

Things come to a head in Next Fall when Luke



Next Fall's Geoffrey Nauffts. Photo courtesy of AstonRep Theatre Company

suffers an accident and becomes comatose. Adam then has to confront Luke's divorced and estranged parents in the hospital waiting room.

"There's a quality to the play as it goes back and forth in time," Nauffts said, drawing from his experience of writing screenplays to give a cinematic quality for his first full-length play. With all the attention on gay marriage, Nauffts reveals that he's also in the process of adapting Next Fall for the screen.

"My hope is that the story will continue and reach a wider audience, both gay and straight to take a look at some of the issues the play deals with," Nauffts said, happy to hear that Next Fall is finally making it to Chicago. "Part of the reason I got into this business was to provoke and to make people think and feel. And it wasn't always warm and fuzzy. There were a lot of people for whom the play was controversial—and a lot of gay people were pissed off because it gave voice to a gay Christian struggling to reconcile his faith with his sexuality."

Next Fall plays from Thursday, April 25, through Saturday, May 25, at The BoHo Theatre at Heartland Studio, 7016 N. Glenwood Ave. Tickets are \$20 and \$15 for students and seniors; call 773-828-9129 or visit www.astonrep.com.

It's Honey!

Fans of Chicago cabaret favorite Honey West won't want to miss her in her new musical, Genderella, which opens the Chicago Writers' Bloc 2013 Festival at Next Theatre in Evanston at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 29. The festival of twelve new plays kicks off with Genderella, which features a script by Joanne Koch and West, and a score by Ilya Levinson. West stars with actor John Cardone in this staged reading benefit that also features food, drinks, raffle prizes and a silent auction. Admission is \$20. Subsequent staged readings of other plays are \$10, with \$25 for an 11-play festival pass (excluding Genderella). Visit www.writersblocfest.org for more information.

Romeo and Juliet as lesbians

Shakespeare's romantic tragedy Romeo and Juliet has already received a male same-sex treatment in the hit 1998 off-Broadway adaptation R & J. But now Romeo and Juliet become lesbians in a new adaptation called Just Another Love Story. This collaboration with Earth Pearl Collective and Realize Theatre Group takes a specific look at youth bullying and youth suicide, and continues at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays through May 26 at the Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston Ave. Tickets are \$20. Visit <http://justanotherlovestory.bpt.me> for more information.

Beautiful Thing in Batavia

If you missed Pride Films and Plays recent production of the British gay teenage love story Beautiful Thing, you have another chance to catch it. The Albright Theatre Company presents its production of Beautiful Thing from April 26 through May 11 at the Batavia Government Building, 100 N. Island Ave., Batavia. Tickets are \$13 and \$10 for students and seniors, with \$1 from each ticket being donated to The Trevor Project—an organization dedicated to providing support and resources to LGBTQ youth. Call 630-406-8838 or visit www.albrighttheatre.com.



Head of Passes. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Head of Passes

Playwright: Tarell Alvin McCraney

At: Steppenwolf Theatre

Company, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Tickets: 1-312-335-1650;

www.steppenwolf.org; \$20-\$78

Runs through: June 9

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

It's too simple to say *Head of Passes* is the Book of Job minus the happy ending, although playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney clearly has taken Job as a starting point. Like Job, Shelah Reynolds's steadfast faith is tested to the breaking point yet she refuses to "curse God and die." However, unlike Job she has no prospects of a new family and renewed prosperity, so why is she tested? With no reward for Shelah's faith, McCraney's play is hard-as-nails and the God he implies is shatteringly cruel, which may be precisely McCraney's point. He anchors his play firmly in the Old Testament, not the New: Shelah—itsself an Old Testament Hebrew name—never invokes Jesus, but only the Lord.

The time is "the distant present," the same mythologizing delineation McCraney used for his astonishing previous work, *The Brother/Sister Plays*, and the place is *Head of Passes*, the primal Louisiana marshlands where the Mississippi River empties into the sea. Shelah's comfortable home there is well-furnished although in need of repairs. On her birthday, Shelah hosts employees, friends, her two adult sons and an estranged step-daughter, Cookie, the illegitimate child of Shelah's late husband. Shelah hides her terminal illness and attempts reconciliation with Cookie, who had been sexually abused by her father.

Told with plentiful humor, Act I appears to be a conventional family drama to play out in Act II. Instead, McCraney literally blows Shelah's house and life away to focus entirely on Shelah's unquestioning faith in the near-monolog Act II. Delving deeper into the Old Testament, *Head of Passes* explores the concept of the sins of the fathers being visited upon the offspring "of those who hate me." But Shelah loves the Lord and follows His commandments, thus invoking God's love "to a thousand generations of those that love me." Which is it? Is Shelah punished for ignoring evidence of abuse under her own roof? She thinks so, but McCraney leaves that determination to the audience.

Head of Passes is quite different from *The Brother/Sister Plays* which were buoyant, joyous

and unexpected with their use of music, storytelling and tribal-inspired ritual. This one is simpler and far more realistic as written and performed, yet emphatically is a work of substance and consequence. Especially in Act I, McCraney takes joy in drawing his characters although he offers neither hope nor redemption as the play moves to a close.

Tina Landau, directing with assurance and understanding, has drawn the performance of a lifetime from veteran Chicago actor Cheryl Lynn Bruce as Shelah. She pulls out all the stops, by turns warm, funny, fervent, bewildered and hopeful. The supporting ensemble is excellent and David Gallo's scenic design sports surprises, but the play belongs to Bruce.

CRITICS' PICKS

Dream of the Burning Boy, Profiles Theatre at the Alley Stage, through April 28. A teenage boy dies of natural causes, but that doesn't make his sudden absence any less unsettling to his family and peers in this sensitive—and strikingly candid—exploration of individual trauma and likewise individual healing. MSB

L'imitation of Life, Hell in a Handbag Productions at Mary's Attic, through May 10. A hilariously campy drag send up of the "serious" 1959 Douglas Sirk film starring Lana Turner involving an ambitious actress, her devoted African-American maid and their troubled daughters. SCM

The Magic Parlour, The House Theatre of Chicago at Palmer House Hilton, through June 21. Youthful master magician Dennis Watkins offers an intimate hour of jaw-dropping sleight-of-hand magic and mind-reading. His repartee adds to the fun. JA

Smokey Joe's Café, Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre at Royal George Theatre, through May 26. Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller wrote the first chapters in the American Rock-and-Roll Songbook, and not that Theo Ubique's dazzling hit revue has moved to the Royal George Cabaret, audiences spanning five generations can be found reveling in forever-young teen-romantic angst. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

The Whale

Playwright: Samuel D. Hunter

At: Victory Gardens Theater at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-871-3000;

www.victorygardens.org; \$35-\$50

Runs through: May 5

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Samuel D. Hunter once confessed in an interview that he "think[s] about death all the time." A survey of his plays might suggest that the barely-past-30 playwright also spends considerable time thinking about his native Idaho and the esoteric religions proliferating therein, both of which appear to leave an indelible mark upon pilgrims venturing forth therein.

One of these lost souls is Charlie, an online writing teacher bent on suicide following the death of his gay partner from a nervous breakdown leading him to waste away in melancholic despair. Charlie's chosen method of self-destruction, however, is to eat in quantities sufficient to exacerbate such obesity-linked maladies as high blood pressure (you could hear the collective gasp from the opening-night audience at hearing his stats) and congestive heart failure. Like any dying man, he receives visitors: his late lover's sister (who also acts as his medical caregiver), his embittered ex-wife, his estranged daughter,

and a nervous Mormon evangelist.

The low-comedy potential in this premise is as immediately apparent as the ads for that musical over at the Cad Palace, but don't come to Victory Gardens expecting any but the most grim variety of humor. In the Gem state, we are told, *The Church of the Latter-Day Saints* is an inquisitory scourge so unflinchingly dogmatic that even its missionaries must struggle to maintain their morale. Teenage Ellie is no cuddly Gleedolescent, but a harpy with a surgical-sharp vocabulary that cuts at whatever comes near it. Then there's Charlie himself, his physical size and immobility—at the start of the play, his weight hovers between 500 and 600 lbs.—constituting a deliberate affront to our society's deepest-held values. Oh, and did I mention that the show runs for an intermissionless 110 minutes?

Incredible as it may seem, director Joanie Schultz pulls it off. Will Allan, Cheryl Graeff, Patricia Kane and especially Leah Karpel deliver intensely-focused performances as Charlie's comforters, but it is Dale Calandra (wearing a prosthetic suit like a full-body crinoline) who—well, anchors Hunter's densely textured parable. He forces those who would dismiss Charlie's sacrifice as unnecessary to discard their intellectual arguments until they are left with no alternative but to accept the course he has adopted, even as they cling to the hope that the fate of this Jonah—or Ahab, if you prefer—trapped within his own nemesis can yet be averted.



From left: Dale Calandra and Leah Karpel in *The Whale*.

THEATER REVIEW

Comrades Mine

Playwright: Maureen Gallagher

At: City Lit Theater at Edgewater

Presbyterian Church, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

Tickets: 773-293-3682;

www.citylit.org; \$28.50

Runs through: May 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Sarah Emma Edmonds—alias Pvt. Franklin Thompson, alias Mrs. S.E. Seelye—wasn't the first woman to fight in a war disguised as a man, but she was the first to be granted full government benefits in recognition of her service in the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War. Ironically, this unorthodox Billy Yank was born and raised in Canada, where the mannerisms acquired through her habit of wearing men's clothes for doing farm chores allowed her to find work peddling Bibles, before abolitionist sympathies led her to enlist with the Flint Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

The success of her ruse lied partly in the customs of the time—males did not often undress in each other's presence, for example, even in the camps—but her chief ally was the sheer unlikelihood of such a masquerade occurring at all. In an age when the rare women serving in military capacities (e.g., Clara Barton) retained their feminine corsets and petticoats, a recruiter intent on assessing the fitness and

skills of potential combatants might not study too closely an eager boy reporting to the induction center clad in a gentleman's suit. Nor did Edmonds' bunkmates see any need to question the resourceful youth's identity when "Franklin" dressed as a woman to spy behind enemy lines. As a character observes in hindsight, "When you're not looking for it, you don't see it."

If Edmonds and her comrades had known they were making history, though, they probably would have kept more accurate records. "Private Thompson" was declared a deserter after disappearing during a bout of malaria. (Edmonds would claim in her autobiography that she feared going to a hospital, where she would certainly undergo physical examination.) Indeed, most of what we know of Edmonds' astonishing career is drawn from her own accounts, which she freely admitted to embellishing in order to increase sales. This absence of reliable facts makes Edmonds' story a difficult one to tell.

Maureen Gallagher opts to focus on her heroine's struggle, not only against the enemy, but the prejudices of her countrymen as well. Justine C. Turner contributes another of her understated cross-dressing turns as the courageous Edmonds, flanked by an ensemble ably invoking their milieu while never exceeding the scope of their narrative. If the conclusion—with the fraternal acceptance of her fellow veterans constituting Edmonds' most cherished reward for the hardships she suffered in combat and afterward—strikes you as a little too Hollywood biopic, you'll just have to write your own sequel.



Big Fish. Photo by Paul Kolnik

THEATER REVIEW

Big Fish

Score: Andrew Lippa; **Book:** John August, based upon Daniel Wallace's novel
At: Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St.
Tickets: 800-775-2000 or www.broadwayinchicago.com; \$33-\$100
Runs through: May 5

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The Broadway-bound world premiere musical Big Fish features gobs of clever stagecraft that simply take your breath away. But then there are also moments when you scratch your head and think, is that the best that they could do?

I'm happy to report that Big Fish is largely in ship-shape form—a relief to risk-averse Chicago theatergoers wary of shelling out big bucks to be audience guinea pigs. But Big Fish has room for some improvements.

At the heart of Big Fish is a tender parental story between tall-tale-talking Alabama father Edward Bloom (an insanely engaging Norbert Leo Butz) and his skeptical son Will, double cast as youth by Anthony Pierini and Zachary Unger and as a grownup by an upstanding Bobby Stegert.

Edward's autobiographical stories are filled with fantastical embellishments, involving mythical creatures like a witch, a giant, a mermaid, and more—much to the annoyance of Will. A longtime rift between father and son is bridged when Will and his French wife, Josephine (Krystal Joy Brown), learn that they're not only expecting a son, but that Edward has been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

As Will strives to seek out the truth to Edward's stories, we get to see many episodically reenacted on stage. This gives director/choreographer Susan Stroman the chance to pull out the razzle-dazzle stops, particularly in numbers involving a backwater Witch (Katie Thompson)

SPOTLIGHT



Barbra Streisand became a star in 1964 when she wowed Broadway as Fanny Brice in Funny Girl. But Streisand actually made her Broadway debut two years earlier as the secretary Miss Marmelstein in the musical comedy **I Can Get it for You Wholesale**. If you've only heard I Can Get it for You Wholesale via its cast album, then see the Jerome Weidman/Harold Rome musical live when the new Lost Note Theater Company presents it in a concert reading for its inaugural season of forgotten and lesser-known shows. I Can Get it for You Wholesale plays 3 p.m. Saturday, April 27, 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 30 and Wed., May 1, at Strawdog Theatre Company's Hugen Hall, 3829 N. Broadway. Tickets are \$20; visit www.brownpapertickets.com or www.paulgmiller.wix.com/lostnotetheatrecompany. Photo by Austin D. Oie

and her chorus of oversize dancing moths, the circus flashback involving a ringmaster with scary secrets (Brad Oscar) and a tap-dancing chorine-filled USO sequence that allows another chance for the super-talented Kate Baldwin (as Edward's wife, Sandra) to glam it up and shine.

Projection designer Benjamin Percy for 59 Productions creates a plethora of astonishing live and video animation effects against the wooden-framed sets of designer Julian Crouch—very much a visual way of representing how Edward Blooms stories liven up the hum-drum Alabama existence he truly lives as a traveling salesman. Adding to the fantasy immeasurably are William Ivey Long's costumes and the lighting design of Donald Holder that also show

the delineations between everyday reality and flights of imagination.

Where improvements could be made are in John August's episodic book—particularly the introductory scene between Edward and Karl the giant (Ryan Andes) that needs punchier humor or a greater sense of menace. Composer/lyricist Andrew Lippa might also consider a catchier opening number to encompass the whole thrust of the show. And the dancing campfire woman is obviously an awkward filler bit to cover a quick costume change.

The producers of Big Fish should be proud of what they have on their hands—a fantasy-filled father-son tale that tugs at the heartstrings. Big Fish isn't perfect just yet, but it's nearly there.

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THEATER

'Anything Goes' for out actor Shane

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The quintessential Broadway musical of the 1930s is unquestionably *Anything Goes*. The frothy 1934 screwball comedy set aboard a luxury ocean liners is a barrel of laughs (a credit to the original book writers P.G. Wodehouse, Guy Bolton and Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse).

But more importantly, *Anything Goes* sparkles with a standard-filled score by the late gay composer Cole Porter. Just a few of Porter's classic songs include "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top" and the tap-happy title number.

However, if you listen closely to the lyrics, some sly gay insinuations can be gleaned. For instance, the song "Anything Goes" features a



Marcus Shane. Publicity shot

verse that goes: "If love affairs you like, with young bears you like, why nobody will oppose." Also, "You're the Top" features the capping lyric, "But if baby I'm the bottom, you're the top!"

Chicago audiences get another chance to revel in the musical comedy world of *Anything Goes* now that the North American tour of the Roundabout Theatre Company's 2011 Broadway revival is playing at the Cadillac Palace Theatre. The three-time Tony Award-winning production uses the 1987 Lincoln Center Theater revival by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, which interpolated even more Porter songs like "It's De-Lovely" and "Friendship" from his other shows.

Rachel York (*City of Angels*, *Victor/Victoria*) stars as the revivalist lounge singer Reno Sweeney, who sings the Act II showstopper "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" (a song title that causes many people to titter for double entendre meanings).

Also in the company is out actor Marcus Shane, who portrays the Chinese brother, John, who is under the watch of a minister named Henry T. Dobson. *Windy City Times* caught up with Shane, a Korean native who grew up with an adopted American family near Ann Arbor, Mich., just before a brush up rehearsal with Tony Award-winning director/choreographer Kathleen Marshall in Pittsburgh. Below is an edited interview with Shane:

WCT: Could you tell us about your character and what he gets up to in the show?

MS: I play one of two brothers who come onto the ship and we are watched by a priest to help

us get back onto the right path in life. My character is a recovering alcoholic and my brother, played by Vincent Rodriguez III, is a gambler. So we're on the boat and there are so many wacky and fun plots and we cause so much mischief because of my brother's gambling problem.

WCT: So what is it like being a Cole Porter musical that is so emblematic of the 1930s?

MS: The show wouldn't be anything without him because he wrote such an amazing score for it. His lyrics are so clever and well-thought-out. That's what makes this score and show feel really exciting. It's classic music theater that has all of the spectacle and pizzazz of any new piece of work that you'll see on Broadway. And what's great is that it's for people of all ages. ... I think that's why the tour is doing so well across the nation. Word of mouth is huge.

WCT: It is difficult to keep fit while you're on tour?

MS: It's hard because you get tempted. Kathleen Marshall's hometown is Pittsburgh and she's telling us everywhere to go to eat. But you really have to watch yourself because you could gain a few pounds. But Roundabout's so good about getting us gyms and it's really important for us to be able to work out every day and keep fit.

WCT: Do you have any connections to Chicago?

MS: I have a lot of friends from college. One is Adrian Aguilar, who is performing right now in *Pal Joey* [for Porchlight Music Theatre]. He's been like a big brother for about seven years now because I also know his brother, Alex Aguilar, who is in New York. I also auditioned for MTV's *The Real World Chicago* a long time ago.

WCT: What are the best moments of the show, in your opinion?

MS: There's an eight-minute tap break for *Anything Goes*. It's one of the best pre-intermission dances you will ever see. Everyone in the company, especially Rachel York, works their butts off. I don't know how she does it every day, but she leads the company in that and then *Blow, Gabriel, Blow* in Act II. Back-to-back before and after intermission, the whole company does another blockbuster number led by Rachel, who just slays it. She's beautiful and so talented. Every time I'm offstage I can't stop looking at her. She's amazing.

Anything Goes continues through Sunday, May 5, at the Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St. Performance times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday (and Sunday, April 28), 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays (also Wednesday, May 1). Tickets are \$27-\$95; call 800-775-2000 or visit www.broadwayinchicago.com.

'Mormon' cast heads cabaret fundraiser

Select members of the Chicago cast of *Book of Mormon* will perform in a one-night-only cabaret fundraiser, Monday April 29, at 7:30 p.m., at The Laugh Factory, 3175 North Broadway.

The event tops off the cast's six-week-long fundraising campaign for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Last year, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS awarded more than \$5 million to support HIV/AIDS and health care organizations around the globe, including local recipient Chicago House.

General-admission tickets are \$40. (Tickets include two complimentary beverages.) Tickets are available at www.laughfactory.com or 773-327-3175.

Wonka Ball April 26

About Face Theatre celebrates its 17th year with "Wonka Ball 2013: Circus Maximus" on Friday, April 26, at 8 p.m. at Architectural Artifacts, 4325 N. Ravenswood Ave.

The Ringmaster's VIP cocktail party will be at 7 p.m.

The annual gala includes a silent auction, the presentation of the 2013 Leppen Leadership Awards and the About Face Youth Theatre MVP Award. Activist Mary Morten will receive the 2013 Leppen Leadership Award from About Face Theatre.

General-admissions tickets are \$135. (VIP passes are \$135 plus a \$100 tax-deductible contribution.) See www.aboutfacetheatre.com or call 773-784-8565.

Bodies of Work Festival May 15-25

The Bodies of Work Festival—which perceives disability art as playing a key role in articulating what disability means personally, politically and aesthetically—will take place May 15-25 at multiple venues.

Eleven cultural/academic institutions and community groups are participating: Access Living's Disability Arts and Culture Project, Jane

Addams Hull-House Museum, Hyde Park Art Center, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago, Lookingglass Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Poetry Foundation, Raven Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and Woman Made Gallery.

The opening celebration will take place Wed., May 15, 6-8:30 p.m., at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Randolph St.

See www.bodiesofworkchicago.org/festival/2013-festival.html.

Nora Dunn at May 2 event

Sven Asmus and Arica Hilton welcome actress and Saturday Night Live alum Nora Dunn for the fundraiser "Myths and Legends" on Thursday, May 2, 6:30-9:30 p.m., at the Hilton-Asmus Gallery, 716 N. Wells St.

Dunn's solo piece *Mythical Proportions* premieres in Chicago Aug. 20 at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

The \$75 tax-deductible donation includes a single-bites dinner provided by Wicker Park's Enoteca Roma; an open bar featuring beer, wine and a special designer cocktail; and five-star desserts by Chana Zelig.

Visit www.mythicalproportions.com.



'Under a Rainbow Flag' ends run

The world-premiere run of the gay World War II musical *Under a Rainbow Flag* ended its successful run April 21. Pictured is Jon Phillips with the cast and Sam Button-Harrison, who plays him in the show.

Phillips is a gay World War II veteran, and Leo Schwartz wrote the musical based on Phillips' life. A longtime Chicagoan, Phillips also lead a very fascinating life post-World War II. He was profiled in *Windy City Times*: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Chicagoan-Jon-Phillips-reflects-at-91-on-a-life-well-lived/41192.html>.

The play was produced by Pride Films and Plays, and directed by David Zak, with music direction by Robert Ollis.

The musical is up for 2013 non-Equity Jeff Awards for Best Musical, Best Director (Zak), New Work (Leo Schwartz), Music Direction (Ollis), and Supporting Actor (James Nedrud).

Photos by Tracy Baim



Paris Barclay: Out director discusses 'Anarchy' and Barbara Jordan

BY TERRI-LYNNE WALDRON

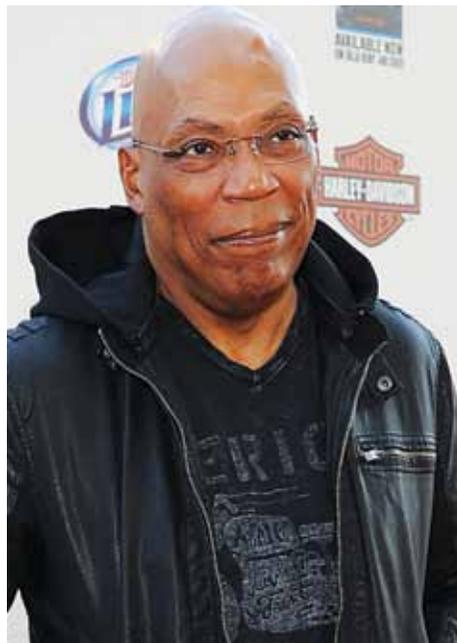
Chicago native Paris Barclay is a director, producer and writer who has worked on Glee, Smash and Sons of Anarchy and the TV movies Hate and Pedro. The married father of two opened up about being called a "gay-identifying" artist, being an inspiration for all Americans and the importance of a Barbara Jordan biopic.

Windy City Times: In 2004 you spoke at the Black Images On Screen festival in Chicago at Columbia College. You were paraphrased as saying that you plan to retire soon from producing and directing so you can explore the challenges of writing.

Paris Barclay: That is a mischaracterization of what I actually said. What I believe I said was that I wanted to shift the focus to doing more writing, and not just doing producing and directing. In the past nine years I started to do that.

WCT: At that festival you were billed as a "gay-identifying" artist. Do you think that it is important for gay artists to create art that speaks to their sexual orientation?

PB: I think it may be helpful to the world at large but I don't think we should impose any pre-conceptions on what artists who identify as gay do. It would be a little like saying artists who are African-Americans should only do African-American stories and should emphasize that. My feeling has always been that you should tell stories based on your experience and things that move you.



Paris Barclay. Photo courtesy of FX

WCT: Do you come back to Chicago regularly?

PB: At least once a year to see my family. My parents are still there, and many of my sisters and brothers are still in the Chicagoland area. Certainly at Christmas time I try to get back to experience the cold. [Laughs]

WCT: There is talk that Sons of Anarchy creator Kurt Sutter plans to end the show after the seventh season.

PB: That's the current plan that I've heard. People who watch Sons of Anarchy know it has echoes of Shakespeare's Hamlet and they know a little bit of the plot if they know about the plot machinations of that play. Then they can expect certain things to happen in the course of finishing the Sons of Anarchy story.

WCT: Tell me about directing the music video for LL Cool J's song "Big Ole Butt," and more recently for his song "Take It."

PB: The video for "Big Ole Butt" was the first video where I started a relationship with LL Cool J and that helped to develop my career. I have always stayed in touch with him and we only live a couple of miles away. When he called and said, "Hey, I have a new record and I want you to come and listen to it," I jumped at the chance.

WCT: You won two Emmys for directing episodes of NYPD Blue. In 2012 you and your husband, Christopher Barclay, were awarded a Family Values Award from In the Life Media, given to "individuals whose representation of LGBT families serve as an inspiration for all Americans." Which award is more fulfilling?

PB: Emmys do more for your career, but in terms of putting a message out there that we care about, you can't really top being acknowledged for family values. We adopted our two children from the Los Angeles County foster-care system and we're really proud of that because there are so many kids that are in foster care that don't get adopted. L.A. is one of those places that, as a gay couple or as a gay individual, there is not a barrier based on your sexual orientation.

WCT: Tell me about developing, producing and directing the biopic about lesbian U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

PB: Whenever I mention Barbara Jordan I'm always stunned that people don't know of her as the first African-American woman in Congress

from Texas. She is a heroic larger-than-life figure, who did so much good and was out there, but at the same time she was so quiet and discreet about whom she loved in private. I find it very intriguing and a good foundation for a motion picture.

WCT: And Viola Davis is playing the lead?

PB: Yes. I think she's one of the best actresses in the world. I've seen a few bad movies that Viola Davis has been in, but I've never seen Viola Davis be bad in a movie.

WCT: How progressive has Hollywood's representation of gay characters and Black gay characters been, and what work needs to be done?

PB: I will be one of the people who says more work needs to be done. I'm really proud of the character that Alex Newell plays on Glee, who is an African-American gay man who identifies as a woman. I think Sam on Smash is also a really nice and balanced portrayal of an African-American gay man. I think what we'll see in the next 10 years is just more gay men of different colors involved in relationships and in stories and that being less and less of an issue of conversation—just being more of a fact in life.

Get your Glee fix Thursday nights on Fox, look for the sixth season of Sons of Anarchy to debut this October on FX and watch Smash Saturday nights on NBC. For more info visit <http://www.fox.com/glee/> www.fxnetworks.com/soa/ and <http://www.nbc.com/smash>.

'Glee' renewed

After lengthy negotiations, Fox's musical dramedy Glee has been picked up for the next two seasons, according to Deadline.com. (The negotiations took longer because the network starts footing the bill after the fourth season.)

Glee now joins Fox shows Bones, The Following, New Girl, The Mindy Project and Raising Hope, which all have been renewed for next season.

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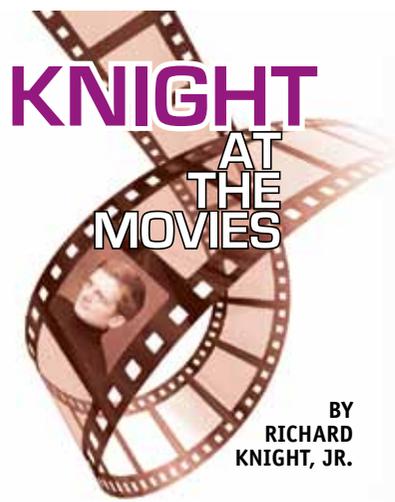
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BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

Pain & Gain; Renoir

I admit it: The main reason I wanted to see **Pain & Gain**, the latest movie from Mark Wahlberg and Dwayne Johnson, was to see these two renowned nipple ponies in their roles as bodybuilders. The chance to watch the former Marky Mark and The Rock—whose careers both got their initial blast-offs because of their spectacular physiques—strut around shirtless and in skimpy gym wear for nearly two hours proved irresistible. And with a nice helping of Anthony Mackie on the side to boot, here was a chance to see some beef and have my cake, too.

Pain & Gain, which certainly does offer heavy doses of male musculature, is also an often hilarious black comedy with a nicely embedded moral—not to mention displaying expert performances from said nipple ponies. Based on the jaw-dropping true story of a trio of deadly though unbelievably inept criminals from Miami who, in 1994, kidnapped a wealthy client and managed to abscond with the majority of his assets—at least for a while—the movie is perfect date fare. (Gay audiences should be warned, however, that there are a few homophobic slurs.)

Don't let the fact that Michael Bay directed—he of the soulless, ear-splitting blockbusters—scare you off. Bay has made a conscious effort to let his incredibly improbable true story and his incredibly buff actors do their stuff. The movie, which was scripted by Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely and is based on an in-depth piece of the same title by Pete Collins, has none of the eye-popping special effects (those hunks, aside) one would expect in a Michael Bay picture—nor does it need them.

Wahlberg plays Daniel Lugo, a personal trainer determined to achieve the American dream of endless riches, a mansion with an expanse of a yard big enough to demand a riding lawn mower to trim it, and all the attendant stuff (and luscious babes) to fulfill the typical consumer desire. But reality is setting in and, with a start, Daniel realizes one day that in five years he's still going to be a guy wearing sweatpants to work. He decides that one of his wealthy clients, an obnoxious braggart named Victor Kershaw (Tony Shaloub, in his best movie role in years), is the perfect target for a kidnapping.

Daniel enlists Paul Doyle (Johnson) to help him enact his scheme. Paul, one of the gym's newest employees, is a recent ex-con, a born again convert who has come to the gym seeking employment after rejecting the advances of a lustful priest. Dubious at first, he signs up after some physical convincing from a blonde stripper Daniel has hoodwinked into thinking he's going to put into the movies. Mackie plays Adrian, a steroid junkie who is also a trainer at the gym—and a dimwit who has fallen hard for a plump nurse (played in her usual out-of-it manner by Rebel Wilson).

"I watch a lot of movies, I know what I'm doing," Daniel insists to the others, and they go along with his plan to kidnap Victor and hold him hostage until he signs away everything he's got to the trio. Although there are several false starts, they finally capture their prey and hold



Vincent Rottiers in *Renoir*. Photo by Fidelite Films and Samuel Goldwyn Films

him hostage at a dildo-manufacturing warehouse. Then the jaw-dropping stuff—all true—starts to pile up and the audience is treated to one unbelievable scene after another; the commingled dumb luck and chutzpah, not to mention the sheer stupidity on display in this twisted black comedy is a lot of fun to behold. Hell, there's even a moment when Wahlberg briefly reincarnates Marky Mark in his Calvin Kleins (albeit, wielding a chainsaw). Things get so crazy that at one point the movie flashes a sign on the screen that reads, "Yes, this is still a true story." To give away further plot points would be to spoil the pleasure of discovery that is, I think, an essential component to this wacky black comedy.

Wahlberg's Daniel—stupid, vain, yet gifted with an insane amount of optimism and confidence—is a sort of misplaced older brother to Dirk Diggler, the porn star character he played in *Boogie Nights*, his breakthrough role. Although Daniel doesn't have a smidgen of Dirk's innate

sweetness, the actor can't help but bring his underlying charm to the part. The same is true for Johnson, whose Paul quickly falls off the wagon and becomes increasingly paranoid (and funnier) as his cocaine use increases. And Mackie, always winning, gets plenty of mileage out of his misguided character as well.

Pain & Gain harkens back to the Coen Brothers' 2008 *Burn After Reading*, which also revolves around an idiot personal trainer (Brad Pitt) involved in extortion. Although that movie wasn't based on a true story and was altogether more "literate," it, too, took its inspiration from the foibles of the aggressively stupid, allowing audiences the chance to feel irresistibly superior. **Pain & Gain** offers moviegoers that same experience—and in our snarked-up culture that might just be more satisfying than the over-the-top explosions, meteorite showers, giant robots and toppled skyscrapers that Bay usually tosses at us.

Renoir—which opens at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema in Chicago this Friday—is, in many ways, the quintessential French film. Focusing on the last years of the great impressionist painter as France was embroiled in World War I in 1915, Gilles Bourdos' movie is a feast for the senses, an homage to a great artist and a sensual romantic drama.

When the aging Pierre-Auguste Renoir (which Michel Bouquet portrays with steely fortitude and surprising moments of longing)—determined to continue to paint no matter the cost to his fraying health—hires the lush beauty Andree (Christa Theret) as his new model, his household is in a bit of uproar.

At the first appearance of Andree, Renoir's all-female staff gives her the once-over, and finds the tart-tongued and rather brazen young woman distinctly wanting. But Renoir knows what he needs for inspiration and brooks no interference, and Andree's posing sessions (usually in the hills above country Renoir's home) become daily occurrences.

Although it's not quite correct to say that Andree bewitches the old man, his youngest son Coco, or even the man who eventually falls in love with her, Jean (Renoir's older son who's on leave due to a war injury), the ginger-haired beauty eventually shakes up the lives of all three. Her tartness masks vulnerability and a desire to become an artist herself (via the movies) and she views the handsome Jean (played by Vincent Rottiers) as the man to elevate her life beyond the provincial. Jean's complicated relationship with his father (something he shares with Coco) and his determination to return to the war after his leg injury heals are also explored as Andree's presence shakes up their lives.

The rich emotional exchanges in *Renoir* are interspersed with visually stunning montages—and one would expect nothing less in a bitter-sweet delight such as this. www.landmarktheatres.com

TELEVISION

Actress reflects on return of 'All My Children' and her lesbian role

BY DAVID-ELIJAH NAHMUD

On April 29, the iconic daytime drama *All My Children* (AMC) returns in a new online format. The revived serial, which ran for an impressive 41 years on ABC, will present four 30-minute episodes a week, with a recap episode on Friday. The new episodes will be available at Hulu, Hulu Plus and iTunes. Fans of the show fought a long, hard battle to bring this miracle about.

For Eden Riegel, it's old home week. For more than a decade, the actress portrayed AMC's Bianca Montgomery, the first long-term lesbian character on daytime TV. The outing of Bianca in 2000 was considered particularly groundbreaking at the time. Bianca is the daughter of Erica Kane (Susan Lucci), the show's much married vixen and leading lady. It remains unclear if Lucci will return to the series.

When we last saw Bianca in September 2011, she was a happy lesbian mom in a new relationship with another mom. When AMC picks up, five years will have passed.

"I can't reveal too much," Riegel said in an interview with *Windy City Times*. "The producers want the launch to be spoiler-free." She did say that there would be "trouble in paradise," and that Bianca would be facing romantic hardships.

The actress promises that longtime AMC fans will like what they see. "We're not holding back," she said. "We're going for it! At its heart and history it's a relationship driven show. There's an appeal these shows have

that's not going away. There's a comfort to the intimate relationships that fans have with the soaps. People still crave these stories. Because the show's return is fan driven the new regime has to pay attention to the fans."

What made Bianca stand out in the annals of LGBT characters on television was her absolute loyalty to her lesbian identity, which included a healthy love life. Bianca had numerous girlfriends over the years, including an eye opening, mind opening 2006 fling with a pre-op lesbian identified transgender named Zoe (Jeffrey Carlson) who was first seen as a man named Zarf.

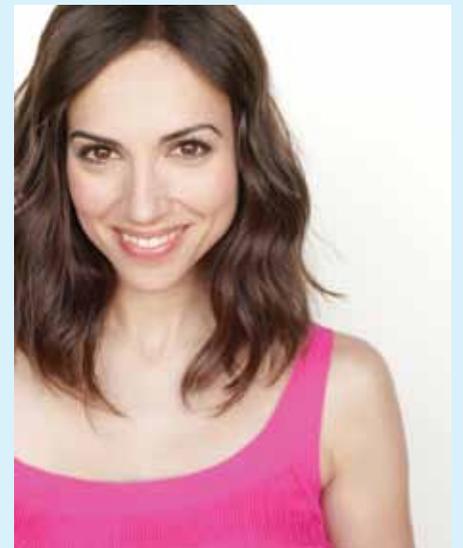
Though she's heterosexual, Riegel found it easy to portray Bianca's coming out, as well as the character's subsequent relationships. "I grew up with gay people who are in committed, loving relationships," she said. "These are important stories to tell."

As a child, Riegel appeared on Broadway in the musical *Les Misérables*. "As a 10-year-old, I attended AIDS fundraisers with drag queens where condoms were thrown into the audience," she recalled. "I thought it was so cool! I've also known people who died of AIDS."

The actress revealed that her real-life sister is a lesbian. "She doesn't advise me at all," Riegel said. "She totally gave me permission to make the role my own."

Riegel describes her initial return to the AMC canvas as a "guest story arc." She tells WCT that she's also committed to appear in a play on the West Coast; AMC tapes in Connecticut.

She hopes to continue appearing as Bianca



Eden Riegel. PR photo

as her schedule allows. "Bianca is an important part of my life," she said, "I like seeing the character into this new frontier."

Look for the new *All My Children* on Monday, April 29, at Hulu, Hulu Plus and iTunes.

More information can be found at www.soapcentral.com.

'The Guilt Trip' out on DVD April 30

The Seth Rogen-Barbra Streisand movie *The Guilt Trip* will be out on Blu-ray, DVD, digital download and On Demand April 30.

Special features on Blu-ray include a gag reel; alternate openings and an alternate ending; and featurettes such as "Guilt Trip: A Real Mother of a Road Trip." The retail price will be \$29.99 for the DVD and \$39.99 for the Blu-ray/DVD combo pack.



Left: Choreographer and AFC Civic Leadership Award honoree Randy Duncan with comedian Paula Poundstone. Center: Lori Kaufman and AFC president/CEO David Munar present the Lori Kaufman Volunteer Award to Robert Neubert. Right: Poundstone and Neubert. Photos by Hal Baim. More photos available online at www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Paula-Poundstone-at-AFC-gala-comedy-for-the-cause/42462.html

AIDS Foundation of Chicago uses comedy to fight for the cause

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) held its annual spring dinner, with award-winning comedian Paula Poundstone headlining the April 18 event.

"A One Woman Show: An Evening with Paula Poundstone" welcomed approximately 500 guests into the Hilton Chicago's Grand Ballroom. The event consisted of a cocktail reception, dinner and a VIP Reception.

Choreographer Randy Duncan was presented with the Civic Leadership Award and Robert Neubert received the Lori Kaufman Volunteer Award. Neubert is director of catering sales at the Hilton and also a board member of AFC.

WGN entertainment reporter Dean Richards and AFC President/CEO David Munar took the stage to welcome the crowd, while Curtis Reed Jr., AFC's board of directors' chair delivered a message on behalf of the board.

Poundstone performed her stand-up comedy routine consisting of a mix of her own jokes and improvised material, which called for some audience participation.

Duncan—a nationally renowned choreographer who has donated his time and choreography to Dance for Life, the annual performance benefiting local AIDS organizations—said he is driven by the fact he can help those who have battled with the disease.

"The great thing about it is having all these supporters and friends come out and say thank you for something I am absolutely passionate about," said Duncan. "It's really no work for me and it's really a privilege to be doing what I do and to know people are out there and actually enjoy the fruits of what the passion is, is just incredible. It really feels good; very special."

In the midst of a difficult and tragic week, including the Boston bombing, Munar said he was

thrilled with the event's turnout, the support from attendees, and the Chicago community's efforts in leading the fight. Poundstone, he said, was a natural pick for the event as she is a long-time supporter of the cause. This event marked her sixth appearance at an AFC fundraiser.

"She lends her talent and her time to help us raise money for the fight, so in thinking about how to bring back the energy we thought Paula was a great pick," said Munar. "Today she proved that was a good decision. We love Paula. She's quirky, she's silly, her comedy is interactive and very standup; she gets the crowd thinking. She's fabulous."

Describing the evening as interesting with its mix of a serious conversation and comedy, Reed said the event helps in raising money and attention to the foundation to keep the foundation strong in further helping the cause.

"There's a lot of issues and tragedy and drama

going on, I think it's good to sometimes be able to take a step back and just have fun, but also don't forget about whatever the greater issues are," said Reed. "It [the event] raises money and it gives us an opportunity to further try to add more donors. So, as we try to attract people to come to the event, we hope we attract more donors, not only for this event, but for future events and also spread more information about what's happening—current information. There's a lot of stats tonight about things that are involving HIV/AIDS and I think that's important that people understand those stats and hopefully that will drive action in terms a donation or involvement."

You can read honoree Robert Neubert's speech here: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/GUEST-VIEW-AIDS-remembered/42457.html>.

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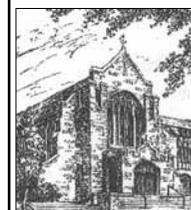
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Policing Trans* Identity: Free Town Hall Meeting Chicago Police Department's General Order on the Treatment of Transgender Individuals; 7pm-9pm, 708-650-0058, TaskForce Prevention and Community Services, 15 N. Cicero Ave, Chicago, https://www.facebook.com/

events/154639754705040/

11th Annual Windy City Gay Idol Windy City Gay Idol searches for the best amateur GLBT singers in the Chicago area. Competition continues through June in Chicago's bars and clubs. 8pm sign up, 9pm start; 8pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St., http://goprider.com/z81w

Chicago Sexcon Historically over 5000 local attendees kick off Chicago's own adult industry summer events. Private party but open to anyone over 21. 7pm-9pm, 847-305-9600, Excalibur Nightclub, 632 N Dearborn St., www.thechicagosexcon.com

Thursday, April 25

National campus day of action The past two years saw a record number of restrictions on abortion across the country and this year 278 bills have been introduced to further restrict abortion. Wear stickers, speak out, raise awareness. 1pm, Various campuses, http://stoppatriarchy.org

Roaring into Our Twenties Woman Made Gallery's annual Gala in celebration of 21 years of support for women artists. Enjoy a highlight of the life and work of Sonia Delauney, art and raffle prizes, music, appetizers, libations and silent films; 5:30pm-9:30pm, Salvage One, 1840 W. Hubbard St., http://womanmade.org/auctions.html

20th Annual Dining Out For Life On Thursday, April 25th, 2013, join EdgeAlliance to celebrate good food, great friends, and a worthy cause at the 20th Annual Dining

Out For Life! 6pm-11:30pm, Taverna 750, 750 W. Cornelia Ave., http://www.edgealliance.org

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Friday, April 26

Merchandise Mart International Antiques Fair More than 100 of the world's most notable antiques dealers will convene in Chicago to exhibit their unique treasures through April 29. 11am-7pm, 847-832-6600, Merchandise Mart, http://www.merchandiseartantiques.com/spring/

Peace Conference and Youth Congress on Peace: Imagining Peace A broad community of youth, community members, advocacy groups, civic and community leaders in dialogue to envision peace for our streets, schools, neighborhoods, communities, cities and regions. Through Sunday, April 28. Registration at 6:30 pm. Program 7:30 - 9 pm; Rockefeller Chapel The University of Chicago 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave., http://www.imaginingpeace.com

About Face Theatre's Wonka Ball: Circus Maximus Three-ring party of colossal entertainment and excessive elegance. Dazzling performances, decadent revelry and dancing, and sumptuous dining and drink. The annual gala includes a tempting silent auction, the presentation of the prestigious 2013 Leppen Leadership Awards and the About Face Youth Theatre MVP Award. 7pm, 773-784-8565, Architectural Artifacts, 4325 N Ravenswood Ave, Tickets: http://www.aboutface theatre.com

Production of Jonathan Harvey's "Beautiful Thing" We don't choose who we love. Love chooses us. See the romantic story of teenage boys Jamie and Ste come alive in this dramatic presentation. One dollar of every ticket sold will be donated to the Trevor Project. 8pm-10pm, 630-406-8838, The Albright Theatre Company 100 N. Island Ave Batavia, http://albrighttheatre.com; Tickets: http://albrighttheatre.com/tickets/index.html

It's Britney, Bitch All Britney, all night. Rare performances, videos, mixes and more with DJ Riley York. No cover. 10pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Saturday, April 27

Windy City Performing Arts Fundraiser "East, Drink & Be Married" Windy City Performing Arts Fundraiser, "East, Drink & Be Married" featuring Halsted Vodka with their specialty cocktail called the "Halsted Honeymoon" 5pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.halstedvodka.com

Casting: ABC's Extreme Makeover Weight Loss Edition Season 4 Open call to audition to work with Extreme Makeover Leight Loss Edition trainer. 10am-5pm, Dave and Buster's, 1030 N Clark St., http://www.extrememakeovercasting.com/

5th Annual Pet Bowl Bowl for the homeless animals of ALIVE Rescue. \$35. in advance and \$45. at the door includes bowling, shoes, pizza and dessert. Bowl between 6pm - 7:30 pm or 8 pm - 9:30 pm. Silent auction and raffle and adoptable dogs would love to meet you. First 25 to register receive a Stayin' Alive gift bag. 6pm-10pm, 773.913.8100, Lincoln Square Lanes, 4874 N. Lincoln Ave., http://www.aliverescue.org

CMSA Annual Membership Party Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association's annual throwdown, featuring drag performances by DiDa Ritz, The Princess, Debbie Fox



HAVING A BALL Friday, April 26

About Face Theatre will hold its annual Wonka Ball at Architectural Artifacts, 4325 N. Ravenswood Ave.

Photo from 2012
by Kat Fitzgerald

and Naysha Lopez. Entertainment, drink specials, giveaways. Free for members, \$5 non-members. 6pm-9pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., www.chicagomsa.org

Chicago Halfway to Michfest Party From party proceeds last year, eight women were able to attend Michfest. Early Bird Raffle Drawing at 7:30pm. Featuring DJ Nikki Butler & All Girl DJ Line Up, Triangle Fire Jam. CC Carter line dance lessons. Win a six-day MichFest Ticket and other great prizes. \$5 suggested donation. Free to festival-first timers. No one turned

Turn to page 21

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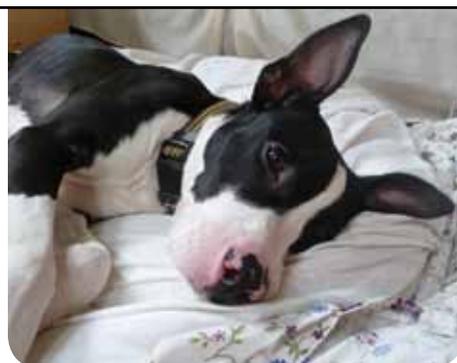
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For more information and videos of Dottie, please visit www.aliverescue.org.

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JOIE DE VINE Sun., April 21

- 1) Finalist Jan Reese goes a cappella, to stunning results.
- 2) Finalist James Gavin proves that this might be his year.
- 3) The Gavin family has lots of theater dates.
- 4) (L-R) Judges Scott Ferguson and Heather Schmucker; finalist James Gavin; judge Elizabeth Ledo; finalist Jan Reese; hostess Sofia Saffire; Creaoke's Tim.

Photos by Kirk.
More photos at facebook.com/windycitygayidol

Look for photos from Windy City Gay Idol at Mary's Attic and Touche in the next issue of Nightspots.



BILLY MASTERS

"Let me tell you this about *The View*: I take a paycheck every other week. That's all I do. I could give a shit what comes. I do my job—I have a contract. That's where I stand. I don't give a fuck."—Whoopi Goldberg answers questions about who could replace Joy Behar ... or, for that matter, Elisabeth Hasselbeck.

No matter where I live, where I work, or where I travel, I'm always a Bostonian. It's still the place I call home. In fact, I'll be in Boston by the time you read this. While the news changes moment by moment, there's hope that the worst is over. The day after the bombings, Elisabeth Hasselbeck shared memories of running the Boston Marathon and how this attack may forever cast a shadow on the event. Whoopi Goldberg piped in, "Maybe next year, those of us who have never run a marathon should head to Boston and run the marathon." All of *The View* co-hosts agreed. Of course, it's fine by Joy Behar—she'll be long gone. Elisabeth may be as well. My darling Sherri Shepherd and I will no doubt drive the route (while stopping at some drive-thrus). That leaves Whoopi as the only one



Billy says that Brent Corrigan (above) is on the mend.

to actually run the marathon. I suppose Barbara may participate ... but probably in the wheelchair category!

Last week, I was proud to be a part of Miami Beach Gay Pride. You would never guess that this was one of the youngest gay-pride organizations in the country from how perfectly organized the parade went. None of the lags or other issues that often hamper these festivities. Given my strong opinions, I was the perfect person to be a celebrity judge, alongside Randy Jones (from *The Village People*) and director Richard Jay-Alexander. No one would be surprised that the highest scores went to Twist nightclub—they constructed a pirate ship, for goodness sake! Honorable mention went to the teens from Safe Schools South Florida and to the college kids at Florida International University. After all, the young gays of today are my ex-boyfriends of tomorrow.

People around the world were talking about Miami Beach Gay Pride because their headliner was Adam Lambert, appearing at his first gay pride festival. (He will perform at the Life Ball in Vienna May 25 and Pittsburgh Pride June 15.) Adam's time in South Beach was jam-packed—he held a press conference on Saturday, received the key to the city on Sunday, and was constantly mobbed by fans every step of the way. This may be what led to a somewhat truncated concert later that night. Nonetheless, the show and festival attracted the biggest audience ever—including quite a few diehard Lambert fans who

set up chairs in front of the stage 12 hours before the show even started! Congrats to everyone who helped make it such a great weekend.

You know that I've hosted tons of pride festivals—from Stonewall 25 in NYC to LA Pride's 40th anniversary and everything in between. And now I get to help commemorate another landmark—I'll be hosting the 30th anniversary celebration of Long Beach Pride May 18-19. What makes it even better is that the weekend is filled with performances by a number of my good friends—including a full concert by Fantasia and her band on Saturday night. On Sunday, the line-up consists of alums from *American Idol* and *The Voice*, including David Hernandez, Kimberly Caldwell, Paris Bennett, Frenchie Davis, Beverly McClellan and Jamar Rogers. You can get more info and a complete schedule at LongBeachPride.com.

Another member of the *American Idol* family was in the news this week. Clay Aiken's fans are known for being very devoted. But one particular Claymate has taken it a bit far. Barbara Saylor from Seattle likes to travel wherever Clay is appearing ... and a few places where he's not. Last week, she was arrested for misdemeanor stalking and first degree trespassing after turning up at his North Carolina home. Allegedly, she snuck into his gated community, climbed a fence, and shimmied up the side of his house to peek in the window. That's an awful lot of activity for a 57-year-old...I'm exhausted just reading it.

But when you put it into perspective, Clay got off easy. Hugh Jackman's stalker was arrested after throwing pubic hair on him! Reportedly, Kathleen Thurston slipped into NYC's Gotham Gym and made her way to where Jackman was working out. She then allegedly reached into her waistband to pull something out—which Jackman thought was a gun. Instead, what Thurston produced was a disposable razor covered in what is assumed to be her pubic hair (I suppose we'll have to wait till the razor comes back from forensics). She screamed, "I love you!" as she threw the hair-encrusted razor at Jackman, which is probably a mating ritual in some cultures. Why he had her arrested is anyone's guess.

Our "Ask Billy" question is from Jarrod in San Francisco: "I heard that [porn star] Brent Corrigan has been having some health problems and was even rushed to a hospital emergency room. Is he OK? What happened?"

Sean Paul Lockhart (Brent's real name) was rushed to the hospital, thinking his appendix burst. As it turns out, he had a bacterial infection, which was exacerbated by dehydration and exhaustion. I ran into him shortly after his ER visit and he told me, "The problem is I just work too hard." Sean was in the midst of filming *Triple Crossed*, which he also acted in and directed. He then had two days off before starting his next movie, *The Dark Place*. No wonder he's exhausted. When I checked in to see how he was doing, he said, "You can't wait for life and work to file neatly into place. Sometimes you just have to take what's thrown at you, even if it's coming at you at once. I'm just thrilled I'm acting and directing." You can keep tabs on him at Sean-Paul-Lockhart.com.

When Hugh Jackman's life is more risqué than Brent Corrigan's, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Sean/Brent is already producing, directing and acting in his own films. I'm sure he's got a hand in writing them, too. If he would just sing the theme song, he could be the gay Barbra Streisand! Never mind—we've already got Tyler Perry. And you've got me at www.BillyMasters.com, the site that is a triple threat. If you've got a question, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Sean makes a cameo in the next *Madea* flick! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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CALENDAR from page 20

away for lack of funds; 7pm, Holiday Club, 4000 N. Sheridan Rd., www.facebook.com/groups/chicagogomichfest

Mutant High Prom Geeks Out presents this geeky queer prom you wish you would've had in high school. \$5 suggested donation, \$5 cover after 11. 9pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., <http://www.geeksout.org>

Bad Romance Large-scale, live concert production dedicated to the music of One year anniversary show. Doors 7pm. 8pm, Copernicus Theater, 5216 W. Lawrence Ave., Tickets: <http://goprider.com/z832>

Sunday, April 28

Urban Village Church Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love and to give of ourselves, as well. LGBT welcoming worship services at Urban Village Church are eclectic and experiential, practical and intelligent, relevant and, hopefully, inspiring. 10:15am-11:30am, Spertus Institute 610 S. Michigan Ave., www.urbanvillagechurch.org

"Southbridge" at Chicago Dramatists Athens, Ohio circa 1881. A white woman has been brutally killed and an angry mob is at the jailhouse door demanding the sheriff lynch the accused murderer. The young black man accused of the crime must relive the events that lead him to the hangman's tree in order to reveal the truth. Thursday-Saturday 8pm, Sunday 3pm, through March 3. 3pm-5pm, Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, <http://www.chicagodramatists.org>

Monday, April 29

TPAN Complementary Therapy Programs Reiki is offered the second and fourth Mondays of the month from 1pm to 3pm on a first come first serve basis. 1pm-3pm, TPAN, 5537 N. Broadway, www.tpan.com

The Cast of Book of Mormon LOVE HEALS - A Cabaret Benefit The Cast of *Book of Mormon* takes over Laugh Factory for a unique, must-see cabaret benefit - LOVE HEALS! All proceeds go to Broadway Cares - providing essential services for people with AIDS

and other critical illnesses across the United States. Don't miss this opportunity for an intimate show with one of Broadway's most acclaimed casts! Two drinks are included with the purchase of a General Admission or VIP ticket. 7:30pm-10pm, Laugh Factory Chicago, 3175 N Broadway, <http://www.chicagohouse.org>; Tickets: <http://goprider.com/z83k>

Chicago Writers' Bloc 2013 Festival, gala benefit performance of Genderella Chicago North Side and North suburban playwrights will premiere 13 new plays and musicals through May 22, beginning with a gala benefit performance of *Genderella*, an original musical. Tickets for the gala are \$20. 7pm, Next Theatre Company, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, <http://www.broadwayworld.com>; Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com>

Tuesday, April 30

LGBTQ Illinois Hispanic attorneys and law students meeting Keynote: attorney Angelica Lopez, plaintiff in the civil suit against the state of Illinois provision against same-sex marriage. RSVP nicole.bashor@quarles.com; 5:30pm-7:30pm, Quarles & Brady, 300 N. LaSalle St.

A Bad Idea Seems Good Again Conversation with the Artist: Alison Rutton on her new series of sculptural projects presented in the current art center exhibition *Nowhere Better*. 6pm-7pm, 773-324-5520, Hyde Park Art Center, 5020 S. Cornell Ave., <http://www.hydeparkart.org>

Dyke March Dinner Visit chicagodykemarch.wordpress.com for details; e-mail questions to dykemarchchicago@gmail.com; 6pm-7:30pm, Various restaurants in Argyle neighborhood

Wed., May 1

Gay Liberation Network meeting Chicago's multi-issue, LGBT direct action group calling attention to equality and liberation for LGBTs, against America's wars, supporting labor and immigrant rights, and more. 7pm-9pm, 312-543-7552, Berger Park Cultural Center, 6205 N. Sheridan Rd., <http://www.gayliberation.net>

Smelts mark 25 years in the pool

BY ROSS FORMAN

Paul Mittleman has been swimming for the predominantly gay Chicago Smelts for 24 of the team's 25 years—longer than some of his teammates have even been alive.

Mittleman, 57, who lives in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood, is the vice president for the Hispanic Housing Development Corporation and had a civil union in 2012 with his partner of 13 years, Michael Calcagno.

Mittleman joined the Smelts about a year after it was formed.

"I was on the swim team for a while in high school, so I was a decent swimmer," Mittleman said. "I was looking to stay in shape, [and] the location and the practice times were convenient. Plus, the people were great."

"I think that the intensity of the workouts were what has kept me there for all these years. It's difficult on your own to workout at the same intensity that you can with a coached practice. We have always had great coaches that put in a huge amount of time in exchange for simple recognition once a year at our pre-Thanksgiving team party."

"Swimming is still fun and still a great workout. Plus, I have made lots of friends and gotten to know quite a number of people through the Smelts."

The Smelts this year feature 133 members on the co-ed club, with 64 percent male swimmers.

"There were always some really great swimmers on the team, but in recent years, the depth of swimming talent has really expanded. Now there are lots of really great swimmers on the team and we are one of the top Masters [Divi-



Image courtesy of the Smelts.

sion] swim teams in the state," Mittleman said. "We've always had straight women and some straight men on the team—now there are more straight people who swim for the great workouts and nice people."

"The level of participation in swim meets and other athletic events have varied. In the early days, there was a lot of participation in triathlon-type events. The Big Shoulders swimming event in Lake Michigan has always been very popular, too. Now we have strong participation in swim meets."

Mittleman was 33 when he joined the Smelts and now admits, "I never would have thought that I would have spent 70 percent of my adult life swimming with the Smelts."

But it keeps him fit, "and I still think that I get some looks from handsome younger guys ... or maybe I'm just dreaming," he said, laughing.

"When I started on the team, I just remember that a lot of the guys were younger than I was,

and [they were] so handsome and such great athletes; it was a little intimidating."

But he persevered, and is smiling wide today. "I remember, in the early 1990s, we used to have practice on Saturday afternoons," Mittleman said. "After practice, my friend John used to come over to my house; we'd eat any leftover food from the week and then we would go over to Sidetrack, where they would have, at that time, two-stepping [dancing] instruction. John got to be a pretty good dancer; I never quite got the hang of it. Then we'd play pool at Roscoe's and generally make a night of it."

In 1996, a Smelts member organized a biathlon (swimming and running) at Illinois Beach State Park. The race started early one morning, so many of the team members camped out. That memory is still strong for Mittleman.

"The Smelts is a great group of fun-loving, unpretentious athletes," he said.

Added team member Lemikas Levender, "The Smelts foster an atmosphere of camaraderie,

with swimmers of all ability-levels and speeds. Through social events and community service, the team aims to promote personal growth and pride for all its members."

The team will be represented at the annual Illinois Masters Swimming Association state meet, which is April 25-28 at Glenbrook South High School in Glenview.

Smelts members also will be participating this September in the annual Big Shoulders Open Water Swim Classic, a 5K event that kicks off at Ohio Street Beach.

"I am one of the few Smelts who swim regularly that has been a member since the 1980s, and I reflect on it sometimes," he said. "It is a great workout, with fun people that is not expensive; I can't think of anything else that I would rather do to stay fit."

"The Smelts certainly have helped me stay in shape; plus, I have met lots of friends over the years through the team."



Bowling benefit raises funds for GL Hall of Fame

A couple of dozen celebrity bowlers and their friends gathered for the 2nd Annual Celebrity Bowl to benefit the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame. The event took place April 20 at Waveland Bowl on Western Avenue.

Dick Uyvari, a Hall of Fame inductee, coordinated the event with assistance from other Hall of Famers. More than \$12,000 was raised. Honey West hosted the event, which included bowlers Mary Morten, Chuck Hyde, Modesto "Tico" Valle, Terri Worman, Sheron Webb, Victor Salvo and many more.

Friends of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) that annually holds an Induction Ceremony for its honorees. Chicago is the only known municipality that so honors its LGBT residents. See

www.GLHofFame.org.

GLHF is privately funded through the donations of individuals, businesses and organizations, along with its 2013 sponsors, including Absolut Vodka, Boi Magazine, Center on Halsted, Circuit Night Club, GRAB Magazine, House of Blues, Chuck Hyde, International Mr. Leather, J&L Catering, Michael Leppen, Miller Lite, Napleton's Automotive Group, Phil Hannema, Remy Martin V, Rick Aguilar Studios, Sidetrack, Supergurl Images, Dick Uyvari/Joe La Pat, Waveland Bowl and Windy City Media Group (Windy City Times and Nightspots).

Pictured, from left: Gary Chichester, Dick Uyvari, Bill Kelley (seated) and Israel Wright. Photo by Tracy Baim

More photos online

Basketball star Griner comes out

College basketball superstar and number-one WNBA draft pick Brittney Griner has come out of the closet, according to Advocate.com. She was picked by the Phoenix Mercury in the draft.

Answering a question from Sports Illustrated's Maggie Gray about why women's professional sports leagues are more welcoming of out athletes than men's leagues, Griner said, "I really couldn't give an answer on why that's so different. Being one that's out, it's just being who you are. ... Again, like I said, just be who you are. Don't worry about what other people are going to say, because they're always going to say something, but, if you're

just true to yourself, let that shine through. Don't hide who you really are."

Griner is set to graduate from Baylor University in the spring.

Recently, Baylor's coach, Kim Mulkey, said she doesn't care about the sexual orientation of her players. When the LGBT sports blog Outsports asked her if she ever coached a lesbian, Mulkey responded, "Don't ask me that. I don't ask that. I don't think it's anybody's business—whoever you are. I don't care to know that."

Chicago Sky basketball draft pick Elena Delle Donne said, "In our sport, we're fine with it. We're all friends, and I want everybody to be who they are. You shouldn't have to lie, that's not fair. Hopefully the men can one day adopt that same attitude that we have."

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I also recommend having an ICE (In Case of Emergency) entry in the address book of your cell phone. That listing can help the paramedics call your LGBT partner or friend that you chose, if needed, while you are riding to the hospital in the ambulance. Also, make sure your apartment building has updated contact information for you and who can enter your apartment and have access to the important documents to assist you. You may not want your niece that you have not seen in over 20 years gaining entry to your apartment because she is your closest blood relative.

Next, each member of the couple should make a will, power of attorney for property and power of attorney for health care and share the details of their financial affairs with each other. This should include the location of all assets and vital documents such as insurance policies, passbooks, deeds, etc. Each person should list the names, addresses and account numbers of every bank, mutual fund and brokerage account; policy numbers for health disability and life insurance policies; car registration and title numbers; credit card numbers; and employer pension account numbers. Make sure the other person has a copy of your list.

The lists should also include IRA accounts with beneficiaries, pension funds and profit-sharing plans, annuities, safe deposit boxes, location of valuable antiques, jewelry, etc. Include the names, addresses and phone numbers of your attorney, insurance agent, broker, accountant and other financial advisers. Keep one copy of the list at home, a second in your safe deposit box and a third at your attorney's office.

Review all life insurance policies to make sure the primary and contingent beneficiaries reflect current intentions. Exercise any rights to purchase additional life insurance on existing policies.

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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